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Dito

THE

# WORKS

OF

# LADY BLESSINGTON;

IN TWO VOLUMES:

CONTAINING

THE TWO FRIENDS,
THE REPEALERS,
CONFESSIONS OF AN ELDERLY GENTLEMAN,
CONFESSIONS OF AN ELDERLY LADY,
THE VICTIMS OF SOCIETY,
CONVERSATIONS WITH LORD BYRON,
THE HONEY-MOON,
GALERIA,
FLOWERS OF LOVELINESS,
GEMS OF BEAUTY.

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# THE TWO FRIENDS.

# THE TWO FRIENDS.

## CHAPTER I.

In acquiring a knowledge of the world, we are too apt to lose a knowledge of self.—Few, if any, ever perfectly understood both.

"You are late this morning, my dear Desbrow," said Lord Arlington, as he entered the dressing-room of his friend, who had not yet exchanged his robe de chambre for his morning toilette.—"How jaded you look; but no wonder, for I dare be sworn you have passed the night in the House of Commons."

"You are correct in your surmise," replied Mr. Desbrow. "I did not get away until six o'clock this morning, and had the mortification to find myself voting in a most discouraging minority, and to have lost sleep, breath, and time for no purpose."

"You do not include the worst part of the penalty," said Lord Arlington; "the inhaling of the pestiferous air of the most impure atmosphere in London, the effects of which are even now visible in your languid visage—chacun à son goût. I left Crockford's exactly at the same hour that you left St. Stephen's, having paired off with Welsford, and sought my pillow with the comfortable reflection of being a winner of three thousand pounds, which dame Fortune most opportunely sent me, when I was meditating the last resource of the destitute—a penitential letter to my father, or an application to a friend. For the Jews begin to look grave at my proposals—ungrateful rascals as they are—after my voting for their emancipation. Hang the dogs, I wish they would emancipate us."

"Will you never grow wise, Arlington?" asked his friend.

"Just the question I was about to put to you," replied Arlington. "I waste my money and time; you, your time and health; which then is the more unwise? I live in the world and am of it; you pass through it, as on a forced march—your person in it, but your thoughts engaged in some Utopian speculation for bettering mankind; while the specimen of that genus, which ought, according to worldly wisdom, the most to interest and occupy you—namely, yourself, is left to chance, the very worst guardian a man can choose for his personal comfort."

"It is true," said Desbrow; "I think, perhaps, less of self, than do the generality of men. But, I claim little merit for this self-abnegation; as, with my views, enjoyment of life must spring from a consciousness of duties discharged, or at least, attempted to be discharged; and if personal gratification is alone to be made the guide of our actions, I fear few would attend to duties, as many, if not all of them are performed with some personal sacrifice."

"You will end by becoming a saint, my dear Desbrow," said Arlington; "but saint or sinner, I shall always love you, though for my soul, I can't tell why, as no two creatures are more unlike than we are. I wish I could get you to come to Crockford's of a night, and become one of us choice spirits."

"And [illegible]," returned Desbrow, "wish I could g[illegible] you to wait for divisions at the House, [illegible] go to Brooks's oftener than to White[illegible], to become one of us, I w[illegible]n't [illegible] choice spirits, but plodding spirits, who think more of country, than of self."

"When you show me the good that results from your exertions," said Arlington, "I may be inclined to listen to your counsel; but, until then, I shall continue to

amuse myself through the journey of life, while you add to its tediousness by examining every obstruction in your path, for the sake, forsooth, of rendering it more easy to future generations. Now I, like the quaint reasoner, who preferred the *present* to the *future*, am inclined to ask what has posterity done for us? and the answer being,' Nothing,' I am disposed to treat it with equal disregard. Spare me, dear Desbrow, the lecture that your grave looks and ominous shake of the head indicate. I must be off, as I have ten thousand places to go to, and ten thousand things to do; so adieu—au revoir—we shall meet at the House, for I must show myself there, and look out for a pair, as I dine with Ellesmere at eight, and would not miss being there for all the questions that have been, or will be discussed this session."

"One word before you go," said Desbrow; "pray let me implore you to abandon play."

"What! was there ever such a Goth as to make such a request, the morning after I have won three thousand?"

"Better to make it after you have won, than after you have lost," said Desbrow. "Remember, my dear Arlington, we are old friends: if you find yourself under any pecuniary embarrassments in which I can be of use, command me—readily, cheerfully will I assist you; but I should be wanting in friendship, were I not to impress on your mind, that play will render the aid of friends useless, by drawing present distress and future ruin on you, if you continue to indulge in it. The pecuniary losses, which must ever be the certain result of play, great as are the embarrassments they lead to, are the least of the evils it entails. Gaming creates a moral torpedo, which palsies every noble and generous feeling in the heart of him who yields to it, rendering him reckless of his own future happiness, and callous with regard to that of those who depend on him for theirs. He who wins or loses thousands, becomes careless of hundreds; because he believes with the credulity that ever appertains to the votaries of fortune, that she changes her smiles too frequently not to visit him occasionally. The more he loses, the more he calculates on a reaction that will repay him his losses; and his expenses are incurred with a reference to his possible gains, but never to his possible losses; hence, heavy debts are added to the list of his troubles. *If he wins*, he continues to play, because it would be folly to abandon fortune when she is favorable; and if he loses, which, by some unaccountable (as he calls it) fatality, occurs much more frequently, he equally continues to gamble, because he has *lost too much* to leave off without trying to recover some part, and so plays until fortune and honor have left him forever."

"By Jove, you have read me a rare lecture," said Arlington; "if Crocky heard it, he would think himself half ruined."

"Let us be serious for this once," said Desbrow. "If you have debts, I can lend you sufficient to pay them; but promise me to play no more; do this, dear Arlington, as a proof of friendship."

"Well, well," said Arlington, "I will compromise with you, by giving my word of honor not to play for a year; will that content you?"

"I am satisfied," said Desbrow, shaking him by the hand; "and now recollect that I am your banker for the payment of all debts, and do not again mortify your father by letting him know that his last year's liberality has not redeemed or reclaimed you."

"You are a strange fellow, Desbrow," said Arlington, musingly. "Here you are ready to lend me thousands, with but a remote prospect of payment; and yet it was only yesterday that you denied yourself the two hunters that tempted you at Anderson's. I have still sufficient grace to appreciate this self-denial, though, alas! not to practise it; but among the set I live with, it would be set down as a certain proof of your total want of *nous*—a want they can as rarely pardon as understand."

"And yet, Arlington, those are the people with whom you live. How can you associate, day after day, with such persons? Can you consider those as friends, who could only be useful as confederates.

"Why no," replied Arlington, "I am not sufficiently stupid to consider them as friends, according to the real acceptation of the word. I call my associates at Crockford's 'les amis de hasard.' I anticipate all you would say, Desbrow, and feel its justice. I know the worthlessness of my companions; and if I am indulgent to their heartlessness and gross selfishness, it is because I am conscious of my own sins, in at least that point. I sometimes think I am formed for better things, mais que voulez vous? I have fallen into a certain routine, from which I have not mental courage enough to disentangle myself; and I vent my contempt of my own weakness,

in satirical observations, on those who have lured me into it. Now you, dear Desbrow—forgive my candor—might have saved me, had you been less Quixotic, less abstract in your theories; but the gulf between mere common-place sensualists, living only for themselves, and you, who live only for others, appeared too wide to be spanned by any arch that I could ever imagine; and so, I have remained on the terra firma of positive clay, while you have soared into purer regions. Apathy is my bane; and is one of the worst moral diseases, because it incapacitates us from combatting the encroachments of vice, or of opening our souls to the approaches of virtue."

"Feeling this, my dear Arlington, can you still submit to abandon yourself to the vortex of dissipation and folly, in which you have been wasting all the best faculties of your mind?"

"Why, I have somewhere read," said the insouciant Arlington, "that they who have not been scathed by vice, know not how to appreciate virtue, which, like health and wealth, are never fully valued —until—lost. Now, I have bought my experience; and no one values goodness more than I do, though few practise it less."

"A truce to raillery, I beg," said Desbrow; let me entreat you to gratify me by consenting to give up your dinner at Ellesmere house to-day. I know there will be a division."

"Yes," said Arlington, "and we, as usual, shall find ourselves in an inglorious minority with the fag end of the Liberals. Faugh! it makes me sick, to see our names mingled with those of men who owe their seats to reform, and whose presence offers the strongest argument against a measure that has opened Parliament to such ignorant pretenders."

"Ah! there is the old leaven of aristocratic prejudices peeping forth," said Desbrow; "you glory in the opinions which influence your votes, but are ashamed of the company in which the votes are given. It reminds me of an Irish lady, who turned protestant because there are no pews in the Catholic churches, and that all ranks are mingled together, without respect to persons. How, with such feeling, shall you aristocrats support the notion of the equality of the grave, the unceremonious contact of vulgar clay, and the impartial preference of the worm, who leaves some high born lord or lady, to banquet on some ignoble peasant."

"Spare me such hideous pictures," said Arlington; "really, Desbrow, you are too bad; but to reply to you in your own style, if we are condemned to mingle our fine porcelain with the vile pottery of vulgar earth in the grave, it is no reason that we should mix it while we have the power of selection. But you have entrapped me into a discussion on the future, when I have a thousand rare projects for the present. I cannot give up the dinner at Ellesmere House. Lady Walmer is to be there, and I would not miss meeting her for—no —not even for your best commendations, my dear Desbrow, though I do value them. —So adieu."

"Stay one moment," said Desbrow, laying his hand on the arm of his friend. "I have known you to be imprudent, unthinking—a gamester; but I believed not that you could harbor, and unblushingly avow, an attachment to a married woman, and *that* woman the wife of one friend, and the sister of another. This is dreadful."

"I am not aware," said Arlington, coldly, "that I have avowed an attachment: but if I did, I see nothing so very dreadful, as you are pleased to call it, in the affair. Lady Walmer is certainly the wife and sister of two men who are my friends; how the deuce else, should I have gained admittance, on such a familiar footing, in the house; and consequently, how should I have had opportunities of knowing and liking her, or of making her like me. People are blamed for betrayals of friendship in such cases; but I say that it is the friendship that betrays, by giving the opportunities for such betrayals."

"This is mere sophistry, Arlington, and unworthy of you," said Desbrow. "I cannot, will not, allow myself to think that you are capable of the conduct I reprehend. No, unthinking as you are, you have too good a heart to wish to destroy the happiness of a family who have treated you with confidence and friendship."

An observer might have noticed the heightened color and embarrassed air of Arlington, as his friend, in the warmth of his feelings, shook him cordially by the hand, repeating again that he disbelieved him capable of such selfishness and deception.

## CHAPTER II.

"We are often ashamed of our friends, when it is they who have cause to be ashamed of us."

Lord Arlington was right when he observed that no two persons could be more unlike than he and his friend, yet a very sincere friendship subsisted between them; a friendship that might have given Desbrow as much power as he had inclination, to draw Arlington away from the futile society and pursuits which were enfeebling his mental powers, and hardening his heart, but that, unfortunately, the former's uncompromising severity of morals was accompanied by a devotion to liberalism in politics, that often led him into positions which exposed him to the ridicule of his opponents. The "world's dread laugh," which had, on more than one occasion, followed a speech of his, uniting the elevated moral code of a Plato, with the enthusiasm and fire of a Mirabeau, had alarmed the more worldly mind of Arlington, who shrank back affrighted from the influence that Desbrow had hitherto exercised over his opinions, and the sarcastic mockery with which he had heard his name assailed at the clubs, though it failed to lessen his friendship, had the effect of decreasing his respect for Desbrow, until, by degrees, he had grown to think him a mere visionary, more likely to injure than advance any cause he espoused, and whose counsel it would be weakness to follow.

Lord Arlington was the only son of the Marquis of Heatherfield, a nobleman of the old school, as remarkable for high principles, as for high breeding, and as strictly honorable in practice as in theory. He was not like too many of our modern men of high station, who would resent the slightest imputation on their honor, yet commit actions which proved, that while they worshipped the shadow, they were careless of the substance. Courage with him was something more than an impulse depending on mere physical force, or adopted with reference to conventional opinions. He had not the courage, so common in our days, of tergiversation in his politics; he had not one opinion when his party was *in*, and another when *out* of office, on the plea of expediency; he could not sell a friend or foe, an unsound horse, or give an insincere opinion; he could not overreach a simpleton, or compete with a rogue; in short, he was an old-fashioned gentleman, as gentlemen ought ever to be, and one of the admirable specimens that England can still boast, which proves that noblemen and gentlemen may be considered synonymous terms. He had horses on the turf, because he thought it incumbent on persons of his station and fortune, to encourage the breed of horses; but he was never seen to come in contact with blacklegs or jockeys; he lost regularly at every Newmarket meeting, to the surprise of no one but himself, as he continued to pursue the same unsophisticated system in betting, that he had been initiated into forty years before, and consoled himself for his losses, by seeing only the most distinguished names in his betting-book. Arlington once ventured to insinuate to him, that his repeated defeats on the turf were to be attributed to his disdaining to practise the stratagems, or to take advantage of the information to be acquired from certain persons, whose *extraordinary* sagacity in such matters no one questioned, and of which few failed to avail themselves when opportunity offered; nay, he hinted that many of the noble names who figured on the creditor side of his father's book, were more than suspected of a prescience with regard to winning horses, that *mere* experience could not furnish; but the air of offended dignity, with which the venerable nobleman repelled the suspicion, so degrading to "his order," precluded his recurring to it, except at the risk of offending him, which Arlington was by no means willing to do, as he was much attached to his father. His associates at the clubs failed not to animadvert on the patriarchal simplicity, as they termed it, of Lord Heatherfield; or to take advantage of it, by backing horses against the favorite horse, which his lordship—an admirable judge of horseflesh—thought certain of winning. Many were the pleasantries passed at the hazard table at Crockford's, on the facility of securing hundreds by betting against him; nay, some went so far as to advise Arlington to keep the money in the family, by offering his father the long odds against all his favorites: but the gravity with which the counsel was received, prevented its being renewed; as, however he might regret the large and repeated losses of Lord Heatherfield, he was little disposed to permit any jokes at his parent's expense—at least in his presence.

Though young in years, Arlington was old in experience; he had not passed five seasons in the artificial atmosphere of London, without having experienced its chilling influence on the affections, and its

petrifying power on the opinions which threatened to become fixed in the cold rigidity of unbending selfishness; yet, there were moments when the natural warmth and goodness of his nature, triumphed over his acquired egotism, and left him open to better feelings. In such moments, he turned from the venal herd with which he associated, to that honorable and high-minded father, or to his generous and single hearted, though eccentric friend, Desbrow, and sought in their society a relief from the apathetic torpor that was growing on him. But exploded maxims and Quixotic sentiments from the one, and exaggerated opinions and Utopian systems of impracticable perfectibility from the other, discouraged his advances, and he fell again into the gay but heartless circle, where an epigram, a sarcasm, or a bon mot, launched with unerring aim against all that is most respectable, never failed to turn the laugh against it, and to win for the authors that applause which silences dissenters and gains partisans.

Worldly wisdom was considered the science most necessary to be acquired in Arlington's set; but their definition of the term was so widely apart from the general acceptation of it in other circles, that an adept in the science at Crockford's, would be considered as little short of a madman, among the wise men of the east—of Temple Bar. For the *rich*, to stake thousands on the chance of winning, and the *poor*, to risk as much on a similar hazard, but with the advantage of being unable to pay, is a common every night occurrence in the gilded saloons of St. James's Street; but to know *how* to calculate the odds, when to back a cast, *in* or *out*, requires that peculiar worldly wisdom, which can only be gained by a frequent attendance at a place that may not be named to "ears polite," and whence, contrary to the old received opinion, the presence of its nightly visitors, at all the places of fashionable resort, proves that there *is* a redemption.

Arlington had, like all his associates, won some hundreds, and lost some thousands; still he believed himself not only a lucky but a scientific player. Whether he was the last, we will not stop to inquire, but that, on the whole, he might be considered the former, we are ready to admit; as he had, for five seasons, persevered in putting his luck to the proof, and was *not* yet ruined; having only exhausted one year's income, and anticipated another, independent of some thousands paid for him by his liberal father.

Arlington's days passed in a round of vapid amusement, that filled up his time, but failed to afford him any rational enjoyment; a latent feeling frequently reminded him that he was formed for better things, and there were moments when he turned away disgusted, if not sated, from the routine of empty pleasures, into whose vortex he had plunged; but habit, that giant who enslaves even more than did the fabled giants of old, still held him in its chains: and though he had learnt by experience that pleasure is not happiness, he continued to act as if he knew not the distinction, mentally promising himself, that *some day* or *other* (that indefinite epoch, referred to by all who meditate amendment) he would shake off the inglorious thraldom of fashion, and live a different life.

Desbrow was of a different character from Arlington, and his pursuits rendered the difference still more apparent. Left an orphan at an early age, and heir to a very large fortune, he had been sent to a preparatory school when only six years old, and there the first impression of friendship was stamped on his ductile heart by Arlington, a lively affectionate boy of his own age, who returned it with all the warmth of childhood. From this private school they were sent, nearly at the same age, to Eton, where the friendship, commenced in infancy, "grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength." But even at this early period, each had discovered that his friend was not exactly like himself, and the discovery often gave pain. Desbrow was never so happy as when, during the play hours, he devoured, rather than read, some abridged history or romance; and his chest would expand, his cheeks glow, and his eyes flash, as some trait of heroic courage, or noble self-devotion, was brought before him on the page. He would peruse it aloud, and with enthusiasm turn to grasp the hand of Arlington, and claim his sympathy; but Arlington's approbation was so cold and measured, in comparison with *his* feelings, that Desbrow, disconcerted and chilled, could not, at such moments, but grieve that his friend felt not as he did. Arlington, on his side, thought that the time allotted for recreation might be much better employed than in reading; yet, he often remained with Desbrow, because he enjoyed not play without him, though his thoughts all the time were in the play-ground.

Notwithstanding that the abstraction of

Desbrow produced some wonder and occasional sneers from his juvenile companions, his abilities, generosity, and high courage had won their esteem.

Amongst them he was a sort of privileged person, whose eccentricities, if they repelled familiarity, precluded not respect; but Arlington was the most popular boy at Eton, and used his popularity, as it is but too generally used, as a means of attaining his own object, which was simply amusement; Desbrow being the only person who resisted his daily devised plans of pleasure, though the only person whose companionship in them, he condescended to solicit.

The dissimilarity of their tastes and pursuits chilled not the attachment that united them. Desbrow had often extricated his friend from pecuniary embarrassments, brought on by extravagance, though his allowance was considerably less than that of Arlington: and, at such moments, the latter felt that to the self-denial of Desbrow he owed his escape from the mortifying necessity of appealing to a father, whose liberality ought to have prevented his son from being driven to such expedients. Prudent resolutions always followed such reflections, but they faded away before the first temptation that assailed them: and the youths left Eton for Cambridge nearly at the same time, with no feeling in common save that of friendship.

Desbrow's guardian, Mr. Beaumont, a near relative, of large fortune and misanthropic habits, was the most unfit person to whom he could be confided. His vacations were spent with him; and the baleful influence his dogmatical theories acquired over the mind of his ward, was evident when he returned from his visits, by an increased seclusion, and a more unbending adherence to his own opinions. Mr. Beaumont, in his youth, had been jilted by a young lady, to whom he was passionately attached, and of whose affection he thought himself secure. Of a naturally morose turn of mind, this disappointment soured his nature, and he visited on the whole sex, nay, on all the world, the dislike that the inconstancy of the lady, had engendered towards his species. To the aristocracy he indulged a hatred that he missed no opportunity of betraying. This feeling had its source in the circumstances, that she who had deceived, and the rival who had supplanted him, both belonged to that class; and this hatred influenced his conduct, long after he had ceased to reflect on its original cause. With a strong bias to Tory politics, he became a violent Liberal, for the sole purpose, as he declared, of assisting to humble the proud aristocrats; and supported many a measure in direct violation of his judgment, to further this desired end. How many of the most intemperate politicians, of all parties, have been led by equally futile causes, originating in selfish disappointments or personal piques? How many pseudo patriots has the refusal of a minister made? and how many ultra Tories have sprung into life from similar reasons? Mr. Beaumont had talked to Desbrow of the pride, heartlessness, and selfishness of the aristocracy, as if such defects were peculiar to that class, and not appertaining to the whole mass of mankind; and the ductile mind of his ward had received the impression, ere reason or experience had enabled him to refute the injurious fallacy.

Thus, he learned to look with suspicion on those with whom his station of life had cast him, and was ready to advocate any measure that tended to elevate the classes which he was led to consider their opponents. At Cambridge the exclusiveness of a few of the scions of nobility, still farther increased Desbrow's preconceived dislike to them; and fixed in him prejudices that, if not impossible to be eradicated, were at least difficult to be conquered.

## CHAPTER III.

"Dans un salon, l'enthousiasme est de mauvais goût, il fait dissonance avec le ton froidement poli qui est d'etiquette, comme des gants glacés; à la tribune national, l'eloquence est une conversation, les mains dans les poches; et si Mirabeau ressucité y apparnissait avec les foudres de sa voix, et les passions fougueuses de sa dialéctique, les centres lui riraient au nez, et le président le rapellerait à l'ordre."

A visit made at Heathfield Castle, and an intimacy formed with its noble owner, did more towards correcting the false impressions of Desbrow, than all the intercourse he had yet had with the aristocracy. The genuine nobleness, candor, and dignified simplicity of Lord Heatherfield, soon made themselves felt, and were as soon appreciated by Desbrow; who quickly learned to respect even the prejudices of the venerable nobleman, intermingled as they were with so many virtues and estimable qualities. Lord Heatherfield, on

his side, formed a high estimation of his son's friend; in truth, notwithstanding the difference of their political opinions, as well as ages, the characters of the two approximated much more closely than did that of either with Arlington's; for there was a certain degree of enthusiasm in both, which found a chord that vibrated in the heart of the other.

If Desbrow learned to think better of the aristocracy, from his intimacy with one of the most excellent of its members, Lord Heatherfield was taught to judge more leniently the classes who had found so warm and high-minded a defender in Desbrow. The prejudices of both yielded to the salutary effects produced by witnessing the admirable qualities of each other, and having arrived at esteem, they soon began to respect their hitherto severely-judged opponents—the first and great step towards that most desirable stage in the march of intellect—conciliation. How many kind hearts and congenial natures are kept apart by political prejudices; hearts and natures, that, if known to each other, might have broken down the hitherto impregnable fortresses and ramparts of prejudice that divided them. But when will men cease to be governed by the tyrant Prejudice, who, like all tyrants, is only powerful in the weakness of his victims. Does not death, sickness, and sorrow, with all the other thousand ills to which men are heirs, furnish sufficient causes for embittering this mortal pilgrimage without the heart-burnings, estrangements, and discords, to which the indulgence of prejudices gives birth? Alas! it is from our own failings that our most frequent, if not most painful, trials arise! and by giving way to passion and prejudice, we deprive ourselves of many consolations which the sympathy and kindness of congenial minds might afford us.

But to return to our story. After each visit to Heatherfield Castle, Mr. Beaumont discovered that his ward joined with less animation in his strictures against the aristocracy; nay, that he not unfrequently dissented from the unqualified censures with which he assailed them, even though Desbrow was more disposed to make exceptions against the sweeping anathema, than to defend the whole order from its fury. Mr. Beaumont attributed this change in his ward's feelings to his friendship for Lord Heatherfield and Arlington, and often taunted him, on the subject of the father's weakness and prejudice, and the son's Sybarite love of pleasure, unconscious that he himself was giving way to much more blameable prejudices, while unjustly decrying Lord Heatherfield.

"You will end," would the old man say to his ward, "by being—I won't say elevated, but degraded, to the peerage, which will be the price paid for the relinquishment of your independence of opinion. I see it all: that old courtier and his unprincipled son have made an apostate of you."

"Pardon me, my dear Mr. Beaumont," would Desbrow reply, "but you quite mistake the character of the Marquis of Heatherfield and that of his son."

"What! you would persuade me that the father is not a pompous, ceremonious, prosing nobleman of the *old school;* and the son, a thoughtless, unprincipled, selfish voluptuary of the new?" asked the cynical guardian. "No, no; *I* know better than that; *I* am not to be cajoled, though you may be. I know the aristocracy well—too well—and equally despise the feudal tyrants of the old regime, as the selfish epicureans of the new. Both are the drones, yes Desbrow, the useless drones, that consume the honey of the constitutional hive, to the detriment of the useful bees."

"But surely, sir, you must admit that the Marquis of Heatherfield, who has never held place or pension, cannot be called a drone."

"He would have been glad to have held both, if he could," interrupted Mr. Beaumont; "and would, if the laborer had been found worthy of his hire."

"Really, sir, you must excuse my dissenting from your opinions," replied Desbrow. "I think highly of the Marquis of Heatherfield; and as to my friend Arlington, I cannot admit that he is either unprincipled or selfish."

"The devil you don't," asked Mr. Beaumont, angrily. "What? then, it is not unprincipled or selfish to spend double the profuse allowance given him by his father; to vex and harass that too indulgent father by incurring enormous debts; and then to have recourse to the first easy dupe of a friend he encounters, to enable him to pursue the same system? This," continued the old man, "in middle, or low life, would be considered unprincipled and selfish; but when the brows of the actor are encircled with a coronet, it appears that it ceases to be either."

To such arguments, Desbrow found it difficult to reply. He could not defend Arlington; but he liked him too well to abandon him to the severe animadversions of his guardian, without, at least, giving

him credit for the many good qualities which he knew he possessed, the recapitulation of which, only served to draw forth sundry ill-natured comments.

"He may well be generous," would the old man say, "if he finds a foolish father, and a thoughtless friend, to administer to his prodigality; he may well be good-tempered, if all pecuniary annoyance is saved him, by want of principle or feeling to be wounded by them, and he may well be ready to sacrifice a little to those who sacrifice so much to him."

Both the young men left Cambridge with academical honors, and the general esteem of all who knew them. Arlington had excited a more lively interest amongst his companions, from the hilarity and sociability of his disposition; but Desbrow left an impression on the learned professors that he was a person formed to make a sensation in public life, provided he conquered the bias to eccentricity that was visible in his character. Both the friends were returned members for Parliament soon after they had completed their majority; both were at first considered as staunch supporters of the administration then in power. Desbrow, however, soon declared himself that political paradox so seldom to be met with—"an independent member," which was defined to mean a member that could not be depended upon; and, as is usual in such cases, he offended all parties. His brilliant talents, which could not have failed to secure him celebrity, if he had acted with either of the influential parties, could not screen him from the stings and arrows of ridicule, directed at him by both, whenever his eloquence was employed against the measures of either. The radicals, as they were called in the House, turned with hope to what they considered so promising a leader to their ranks; but were soon discouraged by the fierté and sternness with which the uncompromising Desbrow met their advances, or laid down his own generous, but Utopian, political system. His large fortune, ancient family, extensive connections, and fine person, were passports to the best society that London can boast. We have placed fortune at the top of the list of his claims to attention, because it is the one that never fails to obtain it—an opinion warranted by the fact so thoroughly established, that in Christian England, a wealthy Jew, with no other recommendation than his property, is sure of a cordial reception in circles where merit, wanting it, would be barely tolerated; and he who can buy "golden opinions from all sorts of men," will have little reason to complain of "want of all the external marks of respect in London." Bacon said, that "knowledge is power;" but had he lived in our days, he would have been compelled to substitute "riches" for "knowledge;" so universal is the homage paid to them in all ranks: and, when one sees the distinctions fortune can command, one is compelled to assent to the truth of the Frenchman's remark, that, L'or est comme le soleil, il donne à la boue, de la consistance.

The twelve thousand a-year, landed property, that Desbrow really possessed, with above a hundred thousand pounds in the funds, the savings of his long minority, were magnified into at least twice that amount, by that most generally untrue oracle, common rumor. His whereabouts were prated of in the fashionable newspapers; anticipations were given of the splendid mansion to be fitted up, in the style of Louis Quatorze, for the rich Mr. Desbrow; new services of gilt plate were to be added to the costly family plate of his ancestors; and it was more than hinted at, that the fine diamonds, which attracted Queen Charlotte's admiration at the drawing rooms some thirty years before on the presentation of Mr. Desbrow's mother, were only waiting until he had selected, from out the parterre of aristocratic beauty, some rosebud worthy of being decked in them. For some weeks, the columns of all the fashionable journals were eloquent in praise of —his *wealth*, and dilated with grandiloquence on all the agréments it commanded. In one he was styled, *par excellence*, the *rich* Mr. Desbrow; and in another, the richest commoner in England. His porter had scarcely time to run his eye over the morning papers, from the repeated knocks at the door. Visits and cards of invitation poured in for many weeks in advance, counting on that which none can calculate —*life*—the most precarious of all our possessions, and bidding guests to feasts six weeks after date, as if existence was held by a fixed tenure. Pink, blue, and straw colored notes, redolent with perfumes, were mingled with the heterogeneous mass of letters that littered the hall every day. Petitions from reduced officers, whose regiments it would have puzzled the War Office to discover; from distressed gentlemen with large families, "unfit to work, yet *not* ashamed to beg;" unfortunate young ladies, under the most dreadful embarrassment; and elderly ones, wanting the neces-

saries of life, appealed to "his well-known benevolence," to rescue them from despair. In short, such shoals of applications were daily made, that nothing less than the purse of Fortunatus could have enable Desbrow to comply with even a tenth part of the demands made on him.

Silversmiths, jewellers, upholsterers, coach-makers, tailors, hatters, boot and shoe makers, all besieged his door, with the newest patterns and chef d'œuvres of their respective crafts, begging the honor of entering his name in their books. New discoveries of balsams, and pomades for renovating the hair, or toupéts and patent spring perruques for concealing the want of it, were recommended to his notice; and dentists apprised him that the finest sets of teeth, emulating pearl, and far surpassing the natural production, were ready to be submitted for his inspection. Desbrow could not forbear a smile, as he glanced in the glass, at his curly locks of rich brown, and his regular teeth of pure white; and in candor we must admit that there was some portion of self-complacency intermingled with the reflection, that at least *he* had no occasion for such substitutes. There were other letters which excited frowns rather than smiles: they came from the proprietors of gaming-houses, designating their establishments under the specious names of clubs, "having the honor of informing Mr. Desbrow that the —— club is open from ten at night until four in the morning, with the bank on the table." Such notifications Desbrow threw with indignation into the fire. What! thought he, is London, the first capital in the world, arrived at that degree of depravity, that such invitations are openly sent to men of character, without their being considered as an insult? He was one day in the act of committing several of these epistles to the flames, when Arlington entered, and observing the visible emotion of his friend, inquired what had so moved him. When the cause was explained, Arlington could not resist a laugh, at what he called the virtuous indignation of Desbrow, who became almost angry that Arlington *could* laugh at that which he considered an implied insult—the being invited to a gaming-house.

"All such letters I throw into the fire," said Desbrow, suiting the action to the word.

"A sort of poetical justice," said Arlington, laughing, "as you only consign them to that native element supposed to be peculiar to the places whence they originated. I too, like you, burn them; but I am afraid, unlike you, I generally look in at these pandemoniums, and have often left there, not only the contents of my purse, but my temper. Spare me, dear Desbrow, the moral lesson that your grave face portends; all that you *would*, that you *could*, say on the subject, my own common sense has said to me fifty times, and yet I have gone on—well, well, le jour viendra, when I shall repent, and lead a sober life, and give you the merit of my conversion."

## CHAPTER IV.

"La civilisation actuelle est un mensonge convenu qui ne trompe que les niais."

The warm reception that Desbrow experienced on making his debût in London, soon subsided into a coldness bordering on indifference, when his soi-disant friends and acquaintances discovered how little benefit could result to them from his riches. Those who had calculated on his dinners, and had even resolved to assist him with their advice in choosing an artiste de cuisine, were as indignant, as they were disappointed, at what they termed his absurd mode of living. Others, who had kindly undertaken to select horses for him, from the stables of dealers with whom their accounts were neither of short date nor small amount, felt almost offended when he civilly declined their assistance: and those, who had, from equally disinterested motives, recommended their too *trusting* coachmakers, tailors, and jewellers, were so loud in their censures, of his want of taste in not employing them, that people were so ill-natured as to suppose that they had more than a common interest in their recommendations.

In proportion to Desbrow's sinking in the estimation of his fashionable young male acquaintance, he rose in that of the elderly; he was cited by fathers as a model to sons; his prudence, his abstinence from gaming, and keeping race horses, were recorded not only as praise-worthy omissions of extravagance, but as positive virtues; and groaning sires, at each new demand from ruined and ruinous sons, wished that *they* had such heirs as Desbrow. The ladies of a certain age also honored him with no slight portion of esteem; and mothers and aunts reposed so much confidence in him, that they frequently poured into his ear complaints of daughters and

nieces, who disliked balls, fêtes, and routs so much, that they were obliged to be forced to appear at them: and yet, the dear creatures were so sweet-tempered, that, when at such entertainments, they appeared so content, few could ever have supposed they were there unwillingly. The young ladies also showed no disinclination towards Desbrow; and, though some persons maliciously insinuated that his thousands and tens of thousands had some share in their admiration, yet he was too good-looking, well bred, and agreeable, to admit of its being believed that his fortune was the principal attraction.

We pass over five seasons in London, and as many winters in the country, during which, Desbrow pursued the even tenor of his way, untempted, but not untempting, in matrimonial speculations. Various had been the country houses to which he had been invited for the shooting seasons; and he had now become so au fait of the accomplishments of the Lady Marys, Sophias, and Augustas, of each lordly mansion, that he shrank back from the exhibition and exhibitors, and learnt to consider each reunion des grandes maisons as a bazaar, where beauty and accomplishments were exposed for sale to the highest bidder.

When appealed to by acquaintances, if he did not think Lady Mary or Augusta very beautiful, he assented with a coldness that resembled more that of an anchorite, than a young man of four-and-twenty; and when repeatedly assured how clever such or such a young lady was, he admitted it in a way that proved he did not consider cleverness and agreeability synonymous terms. An aching void was in his heart; and he began to think he was too fastidious to hope that it might ever be filled up as the women whose beauty attracted, repelled him by their frivolity or affectation; and those whose cleverness allured, disgusted him by their pedantry and love of display. From flirtations with matrons he was deterred, not by want of encouragement, but by the severity of his moral principles; as, unlike the generality of his contemporaries, he *had* tenets and certain established rules of conduct in his mind, from which hitherto he had never swerved; and though they exposed him to the ridicule of those who gloried in that which he shunned, he had sufficient mental courage not only to act up to these, but not to be ashamed of them—a mauvaise honte of which too many are often guilty.

The experience of each session of Parliament, had convinced Desbrow that there existed but little chance of his seeing the adoption of the changes he desired; still he conscientiously attended each debate, and voted on each division, in support of the measures he advocated. He was looked on by the tepid politicians as a Quixotic theorist, and by the extreme Liberals as an impracticable one. His total freedom from prejudice, in judging his political opponents—a freedom so rare at all times, but doubly so, when party feeling ran high had preserved him from exciting or indulging angry passions; and he passed through the busy scenes of life more as a spectator than an actor.

A refined taste and knowledge in the fine arts led to many hours of pure enjoyment: in visiting the studios of the best artists, in painting and sculpture, and in selecting from them whatever most pleased his fastidious eye to grace his mansion, he found an inexhaustible source of interest.

The sums that were lavished by other men of his station and fortune, on horses, and in gaming, were expended by Desbrow in encouraging the arts; and many a chef d'œuvre decked the walls and niches of his gallery which offered triumphant proofs of the excellence at which our native artists have arrived.

Many of Desbrow's hours were passed in his library, which was well filled with the choicest works; and time never flew so rapidly and agreeably, as when, seated in an easy chair with a favorite author in his hand, he yielded to the fascination of solitude, feeling "never less alone than when alone." Often did the thought occur to him, of how delicious it would be to have his solitude shared by some lovely and amiable being; to whom he could read aloud the passages that most pleased him, and in whose sympathy his pleasures would be doubled. But the young ladies whose exteriors might have suited his taste, had so fatigued him with the endless display of their accomplishments, that he sighed in despair at the hopelessness of meeting a woman, young, lovely, and with a mind that could *think* and *converse*, instead of exhibiting her proficiency in superficial talents too often acquired at the expense of the sacrifice of intellectual cultivation. Though the unthinking part of the world pause not to inquire into causes, whose effects amuse them, those who look beyond the surface know that there are no Admirable Chrichtons in the world, male or female, and that a young

lady cannot apply to music and painting alone, the number of hours necessary to arrive at excellence in either, without considerably deducting from the time which should have been devoted to the attainment of that general information and instruction, absolutely essential to the formation of an intellectual and cultivated companion. Fine musicians and painters can always be procured by the rich, who require not artists in their wives; but rational society, conversational powers, and general information cannot be bought. These are the only ingredients that sweeten life, and cement affection among married people Accomplishments are delightful accessories, but cultivation of mind is an indispensable requisite in domestic happiness; yet upon this simple truth few parents reflect, and young women are taught arts by which they may shine in public, rather than the solid attainments that shed a mild and even lustre in private life. Hence that want of extraneous society, experienced by so many wedded pairs in fashionable life, which renders a conjugal tête-à-tête proverbial for its dulness.

Such reflections were forced on the mind of Desbrow, when listening to the siren tones and scientific accompaniments of many of the young ladies who exhibited nightly before him, on the harp or piano, or whose portfeuilles displayed sketches that would not have shamed even some of the best of our artists; but whose conversation, if conversation it might be called, completely proved how such accomplishments had been acquired—at the sacrifice of the cultivation of their mental faculties.

Arlington laughed at the fastidious taste of his friend; and, when leaning over the instrument whence some young lady was drawing dulcet sounds, that "wrapt his entranced soul in elysium," he pitied the morbid feelings of Desbrow, which prevented his enjoyment of talent, because she who displayed it, had bought it at the price of — mind. The truth was, that Desbrow esteemed women much more highly than did his friend; and was grieved, when, by a perverted system of education, he saw them take a lower grade in the scale of utility, than, as rational beings, he thought them destined to fill; whereas Arlington, who looked only for amusement in female society, considered them as creatures formed to administer to his caprices—beautiful triflers, with whom he might while away his leisure hours, seek with the same nonchalance that he sought his other pleasures, and leave with as little regret.

The beau-ideal of woman, as she ought to be, that Desbrow had created in his imagination, and after which his soul aspired, made him view every handsome female with feelings of interest; which only subsided on his discovering how unlike each was to the picture his fancy had drawn. Then, like all enthusiasts, he turned with disgust from what disappointed his ardent expectation; and saw with distorted vision, the défects of those who had fallen short of the perfection he had imagined for them.

Young men who have not had sisters, or near female relations, with whom they have been domesticated, are but too apt to form false estimations of women. Seeing them only in general society, where even the least coquettish of the sex are apt to assume qualities of which they have only the semblance, such men are liable either to give them implicit credit for the possession of these qualities, or, if sharp-sighted, to condemn them too severely for their assumption. Hence women often find dupes, or sceptics, in men of this temperament; while in those who have passed much of their early youth with mothers and sisters, they meet with neither, as such men know by experience that many admirable qualities may exist, in combination with a too great desire of attracting admiration—a fault from which few women are wholly free.

## CHAPTER V.

"Oui te dis-je la société est comme une machine à vapeur lancée par une force secrète et prodigieuse; c'est extravagance que de croire l'arrêter en jetant sous une de ses roues, ton petit grain de sable que tu apelles principes. Il n'existe plus aujourd'hui qu'un seul bien d'homme à homme, de société à société de gouvernement à gouvernement? L'interêt, l'interêt à lui seul."

Desbrow had observed that for several weeks he had seen much less of his friend Arlington than formerly; and that when they met, Arlington appeared much more serious than he had been wont to do.

Desbrow was not one of those tepid friends who inquire not into the cause of any alteration, lest their assistance may be required—a tact in the practice of which, our young men of the nineteenth century have acquired a peculiar proficiency. He, unlike the common herd, sought out his

friend, and inquired, with that unaffected expression of interest, which never can be mistaken for mere curiosity, why Arlington appeared so serious and distrait. The earnestness with which he endeavoured to prove that he was neither, did not convince Desbrow; but he declined urging him further, seeing that the subject was disagreeable to him.

A few nights after, at a soirée at Lady Ardmore's, the marked and unceasing attention of Arlington to Lady Walmer, disclosed the probable cause of his pre-occupation; and Desbrow saw with regret that he was not the only observer of the flirtation, as all the society seemed to regard the actors in it with glances, in which more of malice than charity was visible.

While standing talking to two or three men of his acquaintance, one remarked that the affair between Lady Walmer and Arlington seemed quite established; another said that Arlington was a happy dog; and a third observed that if Lady Walmer committed herself, it might be attributed to the improper female society her husband permitted her to keep.

"Fancy," said Lord Sneerwell, "letting her go about with that abominable old woman, Lady Bronze, who has made more marriages, and assisted in giving more cause for dissolving them, than all the women in England put together."

"I assure you," said Sir Edward Ponder, "she has marred more marriages than she has helped to make; for many of my acquaintance are afraid to marry, while old Bronze remains in activity."

"How very ill-natured you are all," said Lord Metcalf. "Now, I maintain that Lady Bronze is the most useful person in London; for she has a heart to pity, and a house to receive the pining votaries of the tender passion, and one has only to lose a few hundreds to her at ecarté, which she has a singular facility in assisting you to do, and she is your friend for the season, and not only your friend but your friend's friend—pardessus le marché. Arlington has taken his stray hundreds to her mansion instead of Crockford's ever since his grand passion for Lady Walmer—and you see the happy result."

"You may say what you will," rejoined Lord Sneerwell, "but Lady Bronze's is one of the pleasantest houses in town; there, one can always have flirtation, ecarté, and scandal—three of the most agreeable pastimes going; and the old dame plays her cards so well, in more than one sense of the word, that chez elle—'Lovers are all they ought to be, and husbands not the least alarmed.' By the by," added Sneerwell, "old Bronze got off very well in not being named on a certain trial, in which the gouvernante of poor Lady ——— was asked to name the person she considered *fashionable*, but not *proper* society. What a tale might there be disclosed!"

Disgusted with the exposé, Desbrow left the saloon, reflecting that the vice which had been thus laid bare, without shocking any of the individuals who had heard it, except himself, was tolerated in a class that affected to shrink from contact with aught approaching to vulgarity; and yet could live on terms of intimacy with a female, who practised vices that would disgrace the lowest of her sex, and led the weak and erring into a labyrinth of sin, ending in ruin and disgrace.

When Desbrow met Arlington on the following day, he told him of the conversation he had heard the night previous, without naming the interlocutors. The blush of anger, rather than of shame, rose to the cheek of Arlington, when he discovered how openly his position with Lady Walmer had been canvassed; and, selfish as he was, he felt pained, when the thought struck him of how *she* would have shrunk with dismay could she have heard the comments that Desbrow repeated. This thought softened him; and, with more of the warmth of early years than Desbrow had seen him evince since their entrée into fashionable life, he grasped the hand of his friend, and owned that he loved, passionately loved, Lady Walmer.

"And have you ever reflected on the probable results of the indulgence of this guilty passion?" asked Desbrow. "Nay, has it not already led to the moral degradation of her you love? For the purpose of meeting her with greater facility, have you not joined her in the sinful and shameful league of intimacy with Lady Bronze, whose dupes you both equally are? for this vile person, who assists your liaison, would be the first to desert your unfortunate friend, Lady Walmer, if a discovery of her guilt took place; and more, would league with her foes against her, in order to screen herself from blame or suspicion for the odious part she had herself taken in it. Let me implore you, my dear Arlington, to conquer this unhallowed passion, ere it has involved the woman you love in ruin. I do not talk to you of the ruin you will bring on yourself, or the misery it will inflict on your excellent father, though

another would probably dwell on these motives more strongly than the one I urge; but, as you say you love, passionately love, Lady Walmer, spare her, I beseech you, the wretchedness and disgrace that must fall on *her*, if you succeed in turning her from the path of duty. She is a proud woman, accustomed to meet respect at every side, and little able to support the world's dread laugh, or more dread pity."

"Spare me, Desbrow, spare me," said Arlington. "I feel all that you urge: and if I have as yet resisted the temptation to which I am exposed, it is because I have thought of her happiness more than my own, and dare not contemplate the possible, nay, too certain results which the gratification of my passion may entail on her."

"The season is nearly over," said Desbrow; "let us go to Scotland together, and remain there, until the hunting commences at Melton. I have hitherto declined accompanying you to either place, but now I am willing to devote my time to amusements, which you know are little to my taste, in order to remove you from a temptation that you may not always have sufficient force to resist."

"But how," said Arlington, "will my departure appear to *her* on whom all my movements have depended for the last four months? Will she not have cause to think me the most unworthy and volage of my sex, if at the moment I have won her to avow that I am not indifferent to her—an avowal that cost her so much to make—I leave London without an explanation with her? No! this I cannot do; a week ago it might have been; for then, I had not told her how I loved, though my attentions must have betrayed my feelings; but now hers are sacred to me, and must not be humiliated, as they inevitably would be, were I to depart without informing her that it is to save her that I go."

"Do not see her then," said Desbrow; "write what you feel; and if Lady Walmer be the woman you take her to be, she will respect the sacrifice you make to preserve her honor and happiness."

It was settled that Arlington and Desbrow should leave London in three days for Scotland; and the former commenced the painful task of writing to Lady Walmer.

The good advice of Desbrow would have had little chance of being attended to, had not Arlington observed in the character of her he loved, a natural fierté, which not even the passion she was reciprocating to had been able to subdue; and now, that Desbrow's representation had brought the possible result of their attachment more visibly before his eyes, he shrank from the fearful responsibleness of involving a proud and sensitive woman in a position in which she would have to encounter humiliation and sorrow, from which not all his devoted attachment could screen her. The conviction that he was saving her from future misery, alone enabled him to withstand seeing her again, or gave him courage to write her his adieu. Perhaps the proudest moment, though far from being the happiest of his life, was that when he had despatched the letter, and thus triumphed over his own selfish feelings.

Lady Walmer was one of the handsomest women in England, highly accomplished, and possessing great fascination of manners. She had married, in early youth, Lord Walmer—a man of large fortune and little mind, who devoted the slight portion of intellect he possessed, to field sports, during eight months in the year, and the other four were pretty equally divided between the clubs, theatres, and House of Lords. Lady Walmer had been spoiled by a doting mother; as an only daughter and a beauty, the vain parent had indulged all her caprices. She learned only what she liked; and as she only liked music, drawing, and novel reading, her studies were chiefly confined to these accomplishments. Early impressed with a belief of her own importance, which her great personal beauty, even more than her high connections, tended to confirm, she seemed to consider the society into which she was introduced at seventeen as a theatre, where she was to enact the role of premier actress, to the general satisfaction of an admiring audience. Her personal attraction gained her many suitors; from whom she selected Lord Walmer, because he was the best looking, and best dressed man amongst them. In return he was proud to call her his wife, she being the most admired young belle about town, whose possession all his set would consequently envy him. They fancied that they loved each other, and did not discover their mistake until nearly two months after it was irremediable. The discovery was made, like many similar ones, after a few weeks residence, tête-à-tête, in the country, when ample time and scope is provided for acquiring a knowledge of defects, which, if detected *before* instead of *after* marriage, might prevent many an indissoluble knot from ever being tied, and save many an unhappy couple from *yawns*, if

not *sighs*, in after years. Lady Walmer found that her lord was very *tiresome;* while he felt that he was only very *tired* of matrimony, or the country; which it was, he had not quite determined.

"Do you not observe that the days are interminably long, my dear William?" asked Lady Walmer of her lord, one evening during their séjour at his fine seat, as, with a suppressed yawn, converted into a sigh, she tried to find out the most comfortable corner of the bergère, in which she was reclining."

"Why yes, my love," replied the husband, "I have observed it; but, pardon my frankness, I think the fault is yours."

"Mine! mine!" repeated Lady Walmer, while her heightened color, and eyes opened to the utmost extent, proved the astonishment she felt at the accusation.

"Pray explain," continued she, "how *I*, who, a few weeks, nay, days ago, could, as you said, give wings to time, can so soon have discovered the power of clipping them, and of applying lead to his feet."

"Do not feel offended at my candor," said Lord Walmer; "but the truth is, it appears to me that you are not formed for the country."

"By your deprecating my wrath," rejoined the lady, "it would appear that there was something to be angry at, though, for my part I should have taken the observation as a compliment."

"Why, I meant," said Lord Walmer, "that you don't like walking through the grounds."

"Agreed," interrupted Lady Walmer; but I propose an amendment—say that *I hate* walking through neglected pleasure grounds, where dead leaves are whirled over my feet at every step, and thorns pierce my shoes."

"Because," interrupted her husband, "you would, in spite of my advice, persist in walking in silk slippers, instead of shoes adapted to the occasion."

"I detest thick shoes!" replied the lady; "but I detest still more having your abominable dogs jumping up on my dress! and when I am talking to you, to be interrupted by 'So ho, poor fellow! there's a good dog!' or 'Come here, Neptune.' I like a walk similar to those we used to enjoy at the Zoological Gardens on a Sunday, when all your attention was given to *me*, and when we met all our acquaintances. You could then admire my dress, find out that I was looking well; but now,"—and here she looked angry—"you think of nothing but horses, or dogs; and I have caught you twice looking at your betting-book; and thrice have you been on the point of going to sleep, while I was singing your favorite song."

"Well, I must say, Lady Walmer," replied her husband, which was the first time he had given her that title, "that you are not very good-natured. You take no interest in the things I like. Every man is fond of horses and dogs; therefore, there is nothing peculiar in my attachment to them."

"But does every man bore his wife with them?" asked the lady.

"I am sorry I have bored you," replied the husband coldly.

"I expected," said Lady Walmer, "that you would have read to me when I was tired of talking, or hearing you talk. I had the most amusing new French novels; but you declined, and sat silent opposite to me, only interrupting my sombre reflections by retailing to me some of the 'bon mots' of Crockford's or chaste pleasantries of White's. Now, in London, you used to read the passages I had marked in all the new novels, admired all that I admired, and never allowed a moment to hang heavy on my hands."

"By all means let us return then," said Lord Walmer.

"Oh! pray do," said the lady; and the prospect of their approaching departure from solitude was so agreeable to both, that they became more cheerful than they had been for the last six days; and mutually agreed that nothing was so conducive to ill-humour and discontent as the country. In short they discovered that Walmer Hall was a most disagreeable place, and internally vowed never to return to it, except with a large party in the shooting season.

Neither discovered any fault in self, though the defects in the other were very visible to each; and in proportion to such discoveries, was the increased appreciation of self, and depreciation of the other.

With this solid foundation for erecting the brittle structure of domestic happiness, Lord and Lady Walmer returned to society; and plunged into its vortex with an avidity that proved how much their temporary retirement had enhanced its charms. They mutually declared to their London friends, how bored they had been in the country; and implied, by their dislike of it, that their honey-moon resembled not even a *treacle* moon, as a late celebrated

poet was wont to call it, but had more of vinegar and opium than of sweets in it.

Both being good tempered, and possessing ample means for indulging their tastes, their lives passed in a round of amusements, without being embittered by the disagreements that too often ensue, when Hymen has joined those whom Cupid has not united. Lady Walmer, content with being considered one of the reigning belles à la mode, wished not to exchange general for individual admiration; and had, until her acquaintance with Arlington, escaped unscathed by love or scandal. Indeed, she thought herself secure from both; *but* what woman can defy the snares of the wily archer, unless incased in the armor of religion and strict moral principle? The attentions of Arlington had created an interest for him in her breast, before she was aware that those attentions meant more than the general assiduities she was accustomed to receive: for he had sufficient tact to percieve that a premature disclosure of his passion might defeat his object. It was not, therefore, until he had so accustomed her to receive his attentions, and that they became almost necessary to her, that he dared to breathe into her ear the unhallowed avowal. "The woman who deliberates is lost," is a received axiom; and the wife who listens to a declaration of love, has already lost the mental purity, which ought to be her safeguard; for even, if she have sufficient virtue to refrain from further concessions, she must have betrayed a levity incompatible with her duty, or no man could have dared to hazard such a measure—and "he comes too near who comes to be denied."

In listening to Arlington's avowal with complacency, Lady Walmer never contemplated that the passion she was thus encouraging, could lead to any more serious consequences than the countless similar ones she saw tolerated in the society in which she lived. But who speculates upon consequences, when the heart, or the vanity, are interested? She was one of the innumerable instances of the fatal effects of that demoralising system, so generally pursued at present, of permitting, by tacit acquiescence, the existence of liaisons which, some years ago, would have driven a woman from society, the present toleration of which encourages her in a conduct that merits her expulsion from it. Arlington's letter, announcing his departure, opened her eyes to the precipice on which she stood; and she drew back affrighted from the danger she had escaped; but piqued that she owed her escape to the forbearance of her lover, instead of, to her own virtue and prudence. With woman's vanity, she wished that *she* had triumphed over the reason as well as the heart of Arlington, and that she had the power of then repulsing him—which power she flattered herself she possessed, and of proving to him she was not the weak woman he believed her to be.

Alas! we are never so weak as when we count most on our strength! and Lady Walmer, in giving way to pique rather than gratitude, towards Arlington, proved the truth of this adage. "How absurd," thought she; "he seems to have taken for granted, that in return for his violent passion I was ready to sacrifice my honor and peace;" never reflecting, that in countenancing that passion she had stained the first, and risked the second. "How I long to meet him again, if only to prove how ill he judged me. I certainly liked him; but, the idea of abandoning my home and my station (her husband was not thought of) never entered into my head! What! give up my brilliant position to become a divorcée—an outcast of society!—Poor Arlington little knows me, when he thinks it possible."

Thus has reasoned many a woman in similar circumstances, whose imprudence has led to the terrible result she dared not contemplate, until condemned to support all its misery and obloquy. Vanity had seared the feelings of Lady Walmer; and she could not appreciate the motives that led Arlington to fly from her presence, while she had tolerated his passion. She determined to seek him again, and, by her blandishments, bring him once more to her feet, more in love than ever; and then *she* would show him that *she* could command her feelings, and either banish the love or the lover forever from her mind.

## CHAPTER VI.

"Le besoin d'emotions est por nous, ce que l'opium est pour les Orientaux."

Desbrow and Arlington set off for Scotland, the one, satisfied with himself and his friend, for the sacrifice that friend had made; and the other, "casting many a longing, lingering look behind," at her he had left, and left with the consciousness of being beloved by——. One thought alone consoled him, and that was, the conviction

that *she* would understand and value the motives of his flight. Was that flight not the most undubitable proof of his love?—a proof that a high minded and delicate woman, such as he believed Lady Walmer to be, could not fail to appreciate? And he gloried in the idea that this sacrifice would render him dearer than ever to her, to whose happiness and honor it was offered up.

We will not describe the journey, which passed like most journeys undertaken in a luxurious travelling carriage, with a friend to converse with, when the desire for conversation is entertained; and the pockets and net of the carriage stored with the last new publications.

At Edinburgh they fell in with a few men of fashion, who, like themselves, had anticipated the close of the London, and the commencement of the grouse season, and were bestowing their tediousness on the modern Athens, instead of whiling it away in their accustomed haunts in London. But the old enemy—ennui—followed them to the North; and they yawned scarcely less there than in the metropolis from which they had escaped, unconscious that locomotion only lulls it to sleep for a short time, to awaken with increased force.

Arlington and Desbrow proceeded to the Duke of Clydesdale's, where they were engaged to pass some time; and where they found the usual assortment of political and fashionable aristocrats, enlivened by the admixture of a few of the neighboring gentlemen, whose racy accents, and manifold Scotticisms added piquancy to the dulness of conversation, so prevalent in the society of the haut ton.

The Duke of Clydesdale had no less than five unmarried daughters, all as remarkable for their personal attractions, as for the amiable desire of displaying them, and of rendering themselves agreeable to the unmarried male visitors of their noble father, to whose different tastes and characters they assimilated theirs, for the time being, with a tact peculiar to untochered lassies, of noble birth, but ignoble fortunes. It was edifying to hear the grave bachelor of a certain age, observe what a sensible and charming person the Lady Madeline was; how much she liked domestic life, and was calculated to adorn it; while some young peer, who had only completed his majority, swore that she was the most delightful mad-cap in the world, and just the sort of wife to take to Melton.

Not a particle of jealousy existed between the sisters; on the contrary, they played admirably into each others' hands, considering all the unmarried men who came to Clydesdale Castle as fair game to try their talents on, and marriage as the aim and end of all their manœuvres. They communicated their discoveries of the tastes and dispositions of the men to each other; and Lady Madeline has been known to resign a conquest, half achieved, to Lady Jeanet, on having found out that the latter had been flirting with a man who had expressed a greater admiration for herself of which her sister had judiciously informed her. The young ladies' powers of pleasing were, however, tried in vain on the occupied heart of Arlington; and Desbrow was too well schooled, to permit his being the dupe of these female Proteuses, who had sufficient quickness of perception to discover, that in neither of the friends should they find a husband.

Two days after their arrival, the Marquis and Marchioness of Ayrshire, with a young female relative of the latter, joined the party at Clydesdale Castle; and their presence was hailed, not only as an addition, but an acquisition to the party. Lady Ayrshire, no longer in the zenith of that beauty which had made her the most brilliant star of the English Court, for the last seventeen years, possessed a charm of manner, joined to good sense and a highly-cultivated mind, that rendered her a general favorite in society. Mademoiselle de Bethune, her relative, was the daughter of a French nobleman of ancient family, who had married the cousin of the marchioness; and who, having lost her while his daughter was yet an infant, at the dying request of his wife, confided his child to the care of Lady Ayrshire.

Mademoiselle de Bethune was now in her seventeenth year; beautiful as the beau-ideal of the painter, or the dream of the young poet, and with an unconsciousness of her beauty, that lent her new charms, by leaving her unconstrained, and graceful in her movements as infancy itself, with the modesty that belongs to innocence alone.

Cecile de Bethune was rather above than below the middle stature; her form slight, but finely rounded, with feet and hands that might have served as a model to the sculptor. Her complexion was delicately fair; her eyes large, dark, and lustrous; her hair black, and brilliant as the wing of the raven, when illumined by the sun; and her teeth regular and white as pearls. When to these attractions are ad-

ded eye-brows, whose long jetty arches lent expression to the brilliant orbs beneath them, shaded with eye-lashes, that softened but obscured not their lustre; and lips, whose bright color made the cheeks near them look pale, we cannot wonder that Cecile de Bethune was never seen without exciting admiration, nor known without being loved. Her education had been as judicious as the good sense and experience of Lady Ayrshire, who superintended, was calculated to make it; and the yearly visits to London had allowed her to receive the lighter accomplishments that London masters excel in bestowing. The death of her mother had given a tinge of seriousness to the character of Cecile, that accorded well with the peculiar style of her beauty; while the affectionate tenderness of Lady Ayrshire had awakened in her heart sentiments of gratitude and love, which were evinced in a thousand ways, as delightful to that amiable woman, as they were spontaneous in her charming ward.

Arlington was in the library at Clydesdale Castle, when Lord and Lady Ayrshire with Mademoiselle de Bethune arrived; and when going to dress for dinner, he could not resist walking into Desbrow's room, who had entered late from a long ride, to inform him of the new arrival, and to expatiate on the beauty and grace of the young stranger.

"Now is the moment come," said Arlington, "when your stoicism is to be conquered, and by a French woman; for no disengaged heart can resist the attractions of Mademoiselle de Bethune."

"How little do you know me," replied Desbrow, "if you imagine that I am to be caught by mere beauty, and French beauty too, which is that, which I least admire. No, un joli petit minois chiffonné, with lively eyes and high cheek bones; un nez à la Roxalane, and a mouth determined on showing the teeth that belong to it, is not at all to my taste. I no more dread the power of this belle Francaise over my heart, than that of the five belles, who have been so obstinately bent on enslaving it ever since I came here."

The praises of Arlington had disposed Desbrow to think lightly of the beauty of Cecile; and, when he was presented to her before dinner, he scarcely allowed himself to look sufficiently at her, to discover whether Arlington's description was or was not exaggerated.

At dinner he found himself opposite to her, and could not help being struck with the extreme beauty of her countenance, and the admirable form of her head. He thought her, however, too pale, until some observation from the person next her, which he did not overhear, brought the roses to her cheek; and he then mentally acknowledged, what no man of taste ought ever to doubt—namely, that a face in which the lily predominates, save when animation tinges it with a faint blush, is that which is to be most preferred in female beauty. Her graceful and unaffected deportment, and a certain dignified decorum of manner, which, while it repelled familiarity, discouraged not conversation, made themselves felt by Desbrow, and ere she had left the salle-à-manger, he had made up his mind that she was not only the most beautiful, but the most lady-like young person he had ever seen. The triumphant glances with which, from time to time, Arlington regarded him, as if to say, "you see I did not exaggerate her charms," annoyed him, and diminished the extent of his admiration. It was this ill-judged pertinacity on the part of Arlington, which defeated the end he wished to accomplish, of leading Desbrow to admire Cecile, which he could not fail to do, had he been left to discover all her attractions by himself, without their being obtruded on his attention by the injudicious zeal of his friend.

We are always less prone to admit the perfection of those for whom our approbation is demanded; and many a woman has appeared comparatively plain in our eyes, from having heard her charms extolled, whose beauty might otherwise have been readily admitted.

When the gentlemen joined the ladies in the drawing-room, Desbrow remained at the corner the most remote from that part which Mademoiselle de Bethune occupied. Lady Ayrshire was seated near him, conversing with the Duke of Clydesdale, and he unintentionally found himself a listener to their conversation.

"Suppose we go into the music-room," said the duke; "my girls generally sing for us, and I make no doubt Mademoiselle de Bethune is a proficient in music."

Now, be it known to our readers, that music was the grand cheval de bataille, of the young ladies of Clydesdale Castle; they had devoted many an hour to its acquirement, and as many more to its daily practice, so that they rarely met any competitors whom they did not far surpass in skill and science, in this their favorite, and indeed, principal, accomplishment.

Hence their noble father and themselves

thought, or affected to think, that music was the most essential part of a young lady's education, and that those who excelled not in it, were immeasurably behind them.

"I shall be delighted to hear the Ladies Urquhart sing," said Lady Ayrshire; "but Mademoiselle de Bethune is not a proficient in music, though she is fond of it."

"How strange!" replied the duke, with a smile of self-complacency; "it appears to me that a proficiency in music is absolutely indispensable in a young lady, and I wonder your ladyship has neglected to attend to it, in Mademoiselle de Bethune's education.

"Why, to say the truth," said Lady Ayrshire, "the time required for attaining a proficiency alarmed me, and there are so many branches of education which I consider still more essential than music, that I sacrificed it to them. Nor have I had any reason to regret this determination as my Cecile can sing and play quite well enough to please the few friends before whom she would not object to perform."

A contemptuous smile stole across the features of the duke, as he offered his arm to conduct Lady Ayrshire to the music-room; but Desbrow, who had not missed a word of the conversation, turned with increased interest to look at the beautiful Cecile, and felt an increased respect for Lady Ayrshire, whose sentiments with regard to mere accomplishments so exactly coincided with his own.

The ladies Urquhart favored the company with many of the most difficult duets and trios of the Italian school, and even those accustomed to the voice of a Pasta or Malibran, might have listened with pleasure to them; though such auditors must have felt that they would have compromised for less science, and a little more *sentiment*, in their singing, as in this last desideratum they were rather deficient.

The unaffected admiration Mademoiselle de Bethune betrayed at the performance of the Ladies Urquhart, impressed Desbrow with a favorable opinion of her disposition, and the more so, as her appreciation of a science in which she excelled not herself, proved her perfect freedom from the envy so often attributed to her sex.

He drew near her, as if controlled by some magnetic attraction, which he could not resist, and as he stood behind her, suffered his eyes to dwell with a pleasure as new to him as it was delightful, on her graceful form and ivory shoulders.

He was startled from his contemplation by observing her lovely face and bust reflected in a large mirror at the opposite side, and the expression of her countenance varying with the music, now animated, the next moment pensive, appeared to him almost angelic.

When the Ladies Urquhart had ceased their performance, they pressed Mademoiselle de Bethune to sit down to the harp or piano-forte; and urged her with a perseverance almost obstinate, in defiance of her simple reiterated declaration, that "she was so little of a proficient in music that she never played or sang in society, and consequently could not attempt doing either after the admirable performance to which she had been listening."

Desbrow thought the voice and accents in which her refusal was uttered, was the most harmonious he had ever heard, and he never so cordially assented to the proverb which saith, "that a low and sweet voice is excellent in woman," as while she was speaking.

## CHAPTER VII.

"Lorsqu'on gouverne des hommes, il ne faut jamais penser qu'a leurs faiblesses."

Among the guests at Clydesdale Castle, were Lord and Lady Arden, or as they were more generally distinguished, Lady and Lord Arden, the lady always taking precedence of her husband, who was thrown into the back ground, not by the superiority, but by the pretensions of madame son epouse—pretensions which his love of quiet, and knowledge of the pertinacity of the lady in maintaining them, prevented him from ever calling into question. Lord Arden was a man of highly cultivated mind, considerable abilities, and most amiable disposition. Having been, in his youth, a great admirer of beauty, that of his wife, which had been of the first order, captivated his fancy, and while its first effects were in their zenith, she acquired an influence over him, never after to be disputed.

This beauty, which had enabled her to reign despotically over his heart, she looked on with much the same feelings with which despotic sovereigns regard the divine right of kings, knowing that its basis is founded on the weakness of their subjects.

The universal attachment which the

good qualities of Lord Arden excited in the breasts of all his friends, extended the empire of his arbitrary wife. All who wished to show that respect to him which his talents and amiability merited, were compelled to submit to the caprices of her ladyship, who took advantage of the affection entertained for her husband by his friends, to treat them with an imperiousness as offensive as it was ill-judged.

Finding her caprices submitted to, they daily increased, and far from attributing the forbearance she experienced to its real cause, she viewed it as a conclusive proof of her own superiority, and tyrannized still more over her excellent husband.

The first evening of her arrival, the family were rather surprised at seeing, in addition to the usual suite of domestics, a femme de chambre, valet de chambre, and footman, the unusual addition of a page and house-maid. The former to attend to my lady's private silver case of sauces, essences, salt, &c. &c. for dinner, prepared by the cook at Arden House, as she never trusted to strange cooks or butlers.

Antonio, for so the page was named, stood behind her chair at dinner, anticipated her wants, with zealous tact; served her with Mocha coffee after the repast, and while she enjoyed her half hour's siesta on a sofa, gently rubbed her feet, the motion of his hand, as she was heard to observe, "inducing that light slumber which enabled her to get through the fatigues of the evening." The house-maid was the only person she had ever met with, who really understood making a bed, and therefore, she never moved without her, for after all, as Lady Arden frequently observed "comfort was the grand essential of life, and to those who could contribute to it, she was willing to submit. This is the true secret of life," she continued. "Witness its workings.—Lord Arden would be truly uncomfortable were I not pleased; to prevent his being so, *therefore*, he submits to *me*. *I* should be uncomfortable if my femme de chambre was out of humour, because she has a bad temper, and displays it most disagreeably. Consequently, to prevent my being made uncomfortable, *I* submit to her; and the servants are obliged to do the same—so, that you see that the love of comfort obliges us all to make sacrifices."

The morning after her arrival, Lady Arden complained of a violent tooth ache; all the remedies used on such occasions were applied, but still she found no relief. At length she decided on sending to Edinburgh, a distance of fifty miles from Clydesdale Castle, for a dentist, to extract the suffering tooth, and, when he arrived, she declared, "that her nerves were unequal to submitting to the operation unless she saw it performed on some one else first."

The few friends admitted to the sanctuary of her boudoir, looked aghast at this declaration, each expecting to be called on; but, after the silence of a few minutes and no one offering, she told Lord Arden that *he* must have a tooth out, that she might judge from *his* manner of supporting the operation if *she* could go through it. He appeared amazingly disconcerted, but a few wry faces and serious expostulations having failed to mollify the lady, the kind husband submitted, and a fine sound tooth was extracted from his jaw, after which she declared, "that she had seen enough to convince her that she could not undergo a similar operation."

Lord Scamper, famous at Melton, and no where else, was another of the guests at Clydesdale Castle.

Lady Arden declared that he was unbearable, his language only fit for the stable, and worse than all, that he used lavender water on his handkerchief; she requested that he might be placed as far from her at table as possible, while he whispered to Lady Madeline, that "Lady Arden seemed a very odd person, and reminded him of his famous mare Juno, who was shy of strangers, and would only be fed from the hands of a little groom boy in his stable, just as Lady Arden would only be served by her page."

Some one having talked of a new poem much read, Lord Scamper shook his head and said "There was only one really interesting poem in our language." Half a dozen people asked him to name it, as all were curious to hear the opinion of a person whose judgment on horses or dogs alone was considered sound.

"Somerville's Chace!" was triumphantly quoted by him, as his favorite; "indeed," added he, with naïveté "I never could get through any other poem, as they always set me to sleep."

Lady Rosina Urquhart, with an insinuating smile, meant to captivate Mr. Stuart, a young Scotchman of large fortune, on whose heart she had certain designs, and whose taste in poetry she had, with the quickness of perception peculiar to herself and sisters, already discovered, observed that "The Bride of Abydos," was, in her opinion, a most exquisite poem.

"Why, as to that," said Lord Scam-

per, "I once heard it read aloud—that is to say, between whiles—when I was awaked by the exclamations of the ladies who were present, and when it was over, and they all were moved to tears, I asked them the simple question, of why the poem was called *Bride* of Abydos? for, as far as I could discover, there was no marriage at all in the case. They were all very angry at my remark, but I like to be exact; and when I find such mistakes, I cry out against being taken in."

Lady Jeanet, who respected the rent-roll of Lord Scamper, however she might despise his mental qualifications, remarked, "That it was very true—it was wrong to entitle 'Zuleika,' a bride, as she was not married;" and she was thanked by an approving smile from Lord Scamper, who, encouraged by her assent, launched forth into a critique,—if critique it could be called—on the other poems of Lord Byron.

"'Childe Harolde,'" he pronounced, "to be a fanciful spoiled boy, who knew not what he wanted, who left England in disgust—more shame for him, and found, in every country he visited, the ennui he tried to escape from: had he tried Melton, he would never have left England. 'The Giaour,' was a desperado, influenced only by two passions—*love* and *vengeance*—a rascal," added Lord Scamper, "who in England would have been subject for the surgeons, instead of subject for the poet. 'The Corsair,'" continued he, "was no more or less than a pirate. Now, I say that I see little good in exciting sympathy for persons whose crimes merit a gibbet, and whom a jury of twelve honest men would EXALT in a different, though less poetical, way than Byron has done. 'Lara,' is another false hero, all mystery and moonshine; and yet our ladies weep over the recital of actions and crimes, which, if told in plain prose without the charm of fine words, and images, would excite their detestation; and gentlemen read with admiration of actions, which, if called on as honest men on the bench of magistrates to judge, they would punish with the utmost severity of the laws, which such culprits had violated."

"But will you not admit," asked Lady Arden, (somewhat amused with the plain matter-of-fact view Lord Scamper had taken of Lord Byron's heroes,) "that 'Parisina' is a tale full of interest?"

"Not more so," replied Lord Scamper, "than half the trials in actions of damages, except that the heroine chooses the son of her husband for her lover. Now, if I saw a wife or sister of mine weep over the fate of such a jade as Parisina, I should rate her soundly; and the ladies who do pity such jades, and in their boudoirs melt over the story, would be the first to turn their backs on one of their less guilty country-women, nay, attack her with severity, as if to prove their own purity. 'Beppo' has less humbug in it than any of the rest of Byron's poems, and therefore I like it best; but as for 'Manfred,' he is the most crazy, improbable personage that ever a poet took it into his head to paint—a blockhead that believes in sorcery, and speechifies to mountains and rocks, and whose insinuated crimes not only ought to have prevented his being made a hero of, but ought to have led to his being shut up in a mad-house."

"Why, as to the belief in sorcery," said Mr. M'Tagart, "that is, I admit, too ridiculous. I canna eemagine, hoo a man can give in to sich superstition. If 'Manfred' had believed in the second sight, there would be some sense in it."

"Oh! would to Heaven," exclaimed Lady Arden, in *sotto voce*, "that we had some Meleager here to destroy this Caledonian bore, who interrupts yonder Nimrod in the midst of his sapient reflections."

"But how comes it, my lord," asked Lady Arden, determined not to allow M'Tagart to continue, "that you who stated that all poems, except Somerville's Chace, set you to sleep, can have acquired such a knowledge—I won't say an accurate one—of Lord Byron's poems?"

"Well, as you have asked the question," replied Lord Scamper, "I don't mind telling you the fact. When I found wherever I went, that people were always talking of Byron's works, and entering into details about them, I felt so cursedly foolish, knowing nothing of the subject, that I employed one of my solicitor's clerks—a clever lad—to write me down a concise account of the character of each hero, plain matter of fact, leaving out all descriptions and fine words: What I have told you is an abridgment of what the lad wrote; and when I found that all England were admiring persons, whose crimes our laws would have punished so severely, I asked myself if it was not a shame for a man, and a peer too, to lend his genius to excite that sympathy for guilt which should only be given to honor and virtue."

A smile of contempt played over the haughty countenance of Lady Arden, which Lord Scamper observing, he added,

"Your ladyship may smile at my opinions; but when I tell you that I got the clever lad I mentioned to draw out a case for each of the characters, and to submit it for counsel's opinion; and that the opinion was that each of the imaginary persons named would be liable to the severest penalty of the laws, you will admit that I do not speak without some knowledge of the matter. None of us feel much pity for smugglers, poachers or murderers, in real life; then why should we sympathise so much with villains in poetry?"

The gentlemen laughed; the ladies, with the exception of Lady Jeanet, dissented from Lord Scamper's matter-of fact opinions; but she looked approval, and he seemed satisfied with her approbation.

The attention that Lady Arden engrossed was extremely offensive to the Ladies Urquhart; and they gave vent to the ire it excited, in expressions in which none of the peculiarities of her ladyship were spared. The good nature and gentleness with which Mademoiselle de Bethune endeavoured to find excuses for the arbitrary lady, and to deprecate the wrath of the complaining ones, increased still more strongly the favorable impression she had made on Desbrow.

On leaving the music room, some of the party assembled round a table covered with albums, filled with drawings by the Ladies Urquhart, and the admiration of the guests was elicited for the performances of each.

Desbrow approached, and offered to turn over the leaves of the album for Mademoiselle de Bethune, and they examined the drawings together; this led to a conversation, in which the justness of her remarks, and the modesty and gentleness with which they were made, still more captivated him. The ladies Urquhart interchanged significant glances, as they observed the attention Desbrow was paying to Mademoiselle de Bethune, and Arlington enjoyed it, while, at a little distance, he affected to be occupied in looking over a portfolio.

A view of a scene in France led Desbrow to ask Mademoiselle de Bethune if she had been lately in her native country; and he remarked at the same time, that she spoke English so perfectly, that it was only by name that he knew she was French. A blush and smile repaid him for the observation, while she added, that nearly all her life had been passed in England; and having had an English mother, and adopted mother, she considered herself more than half English, though a dear father and brother in France, often reminded her she was a French woman, and called her thoughts and affections to her native country.

Desbrow retired for the night, his head and heart occupied by the beautiful Cecile; and his valet de chambre remarked, when assisting his toilette next morning, that he had never before seen his master half so fastidious. Desbrow smiled as he detected his own attention to the becoming in his dress, and rejoiced that Arlington was not present to observe and banter him.

A morning déshabille, that trial to female beauty, and a morning sun, which so few even of the fairest can bear, brightly beaming on her countenance, increased rather than diminished the charms of Mademoiselle de Bethune, which never appeared to greater advantage than in the simple white morning dress, leaving only her fair throat and beautiful hands uncovered, while her raven hair, in all its silken luxuriance, fell in spiral ringlets, round her polished temples, and shaded, but hid not, the delicate rose of her cheeks. Desbrow could scarcely withdraw his eyes from her; and when her mild glances met his, the soft blush that suffused her face as she withdrew them, betrayed that she was conscious of occupying much of his attention, and not displeased by it.

After breakfast, an equestrian excursion was proposed; and some of the ladies consented to join it. Desbrow had decided the day before on going to shoot, and had made all necessary arrangements with the keepers; but when he heard Mademoiselle de Bethune assent to make one of the riding party, he immediately determined to ride also; and not even the arch smile of Arlington had power to prevent his eagerly seeking to place himself as near Cecile as he could, in the gay cavalcade that left the castle.

They proceeded to view a ruined abbey, whose picturesque appearance the Ladies Urquhart loudly commended, and had perpetuated in many a drawing; and in justice to them, we must add, the view of the original proved the correctness of their pencils.

Having explored the ruin, admired the delicate tracery of its arched windows, and the vivid draperies of ivy, that adorned them, the party proceeded homewards by a different route, following the windings of the river. The road was narrow and uneven, being nothing more than a track for horse or foot passengers, and often ap-

proaching the edge of a steep bank of the rapid river. The party were obliged to proceed singly; and Mademoiselle de Bethune and Desbrow who had been engaged in an interesting conversation, found themselves at a little distance behind the others. In passing a very abrupt turn of the path, the bank, which had been undermined by the water, gave way, and Cecile and her horse were precipitated into the river, the horse plunging violently to disengage himself from his rider, who, with great presence of mind, maintained her seat, though the force of the current, and the efforts of the struggling animal, rendered it a most difficult task. To throw himself from his horse and jump into the river, was the work of a moment with Desbrow; who, being an expert swimmer, hoped to be able to seize the bridle of Cecile's horse, and turn its head to the shore, from which the current was carrying it. But the violent exertions it made, burst the girths, and its helpless rider, instantaneously overwhelmed in the eddying circles of the water, was sinking to rise no more, when, with a desperate effort, Desbrow seized her, and bore her to the shore; where, exhausted and breathless he placed his precious burthen and then sank nearly as lifeless as her he had saved.

It was some minutes ere the united efforts of all the party could restore animation to Cecile, during which time Desbrow who had recovered from the momentary prostration of his strength, hung over her in distraction, pressing the water from her streaming tresses, and chafing her cold hands. By degrees her cheek assumed a less deadly tint, her heart again commenced its pulsations, and opening her languid eyes, she fixed them for a moment on Desbrow, with an expression of grateful tenderness which sank into his heart. She then closed them again, overcome by the exertion she had made, while a pearly drop escaped each snowy lid, and the lips moved as if speaking, though no sound escaped them.

Lord Ayrshire, in the warmth of his gratitude for the safety of Cecile, pressed again and again the hands of Desbrow.

"How shall I thank you? what shall we do to prove our gratitude?" exclaimed he, while Desbrow, returning the pressure, added—

"Am I not more than repaid in seeing her again restored to life?"

A servant was despatched to Clydesdale Castle to order a carriage, and the necessary change of dress for Mademoiselle de Bethune, with strict injunctions to conceal the imminent danger to which she had been exposed, as Lord Ayrshire dreaded the effect it might produce on his wife, even though assured of her safety.

Cecile had now recovered, and was able to thank her preserver by words as well as by looks, but the latter were still more expressive; and when Desbrow pressed the hand she extended to him to his lips, it was not withdrawn, nay, he thought, but it might be only fancy, that a gentle pressure returned his ardent grasp.

This event, so nearly being attended by the most fatal consequences, produced an effect on the feelings of the two persons—the saved and saver—which it might have taken months to establish. Desbrow felt as if he was privileged to hope that he might protect the life he had preserved; and Cecile, the pure-minded and affectionate Cecile, thought she was only obeying the dictates of gratitude, when she suffered her thoughts continually to revert to him, to whom under heaven, she owed her safety.

Lord and Lady Ayrshire's feelings of thankfulness were as warm as their expressions of it, and Desbrow found himself treated by them not as a new acquaintance, but as an old and most valued friend, whose praises they were never tired of proclaiming. Happily no illness followed the accident; and a little languor, which stole nothing from the charms of Cecile's beautiful countenance, was all the injury she sustained from it.

Lady Madeline said, that "Mademoiselle de Bethune's recent accident resembled an incident in a novel. When I saw Mr. Desbrow," continued she, "with one arm supporting Mademoiselle de Bethune, and with the other cleaving the current, whose force threatened every moment to overwhelm them, I thought it was just such a scene as one reads of."

"And I," said Lord Scamper, "was reminded of the famous day we had at Melton last year, when I swam the Smite on Sky Scraper, bearing the brush triumphantly, which I had twice risked my life to secure that day. It was a glorious sight."

Lady Jeanet put on a look of intense interest, and the gratified fox-hunter repaid it by increased attentions to her.

When the visit of the Ayrshires drew near its close, they invited Desbrow and his friend to accompany them to their seat in the neighborhood—an invitation too agreeable to be resisted.

The three weeks they had spent together

at Clydesdale Castle, had cemented an affection which the brevity of the date of their acquaintance, under other circumstances, might never have achieved: and Desbrow only waited a favorable opportunity to declare his sentiments to the fair object who had inspired them, and to demand her permission to make them known to Lord and Lady Ayrshire.

"How strange," said Lady Madeline to her sisters, "that Mademoiselle de Bethune, who took no pains whatever to captivate Mr. Desbrow, should have so completely succeeded in doing so, and in so short a time. I really begin to believe that it is better not to lay one's self out to please, and let things take their natural course; for if successful, we have the satisfaction of knowing that the success was not acquired at the expense of fatiguing efforts to win it; and if otherwise, one has not the mortification of feeling that our efforts to please have been practised in vain."

"I believe you are right." said Lady Jeanet; "for, after all, there is nothing so tiresome as being always on the qui vive to please; we have danced all night to catch some booby who professed to dote on Terpsichore, and who, having only claimed our hands for a night, has claimed for life that of some indolent damsel, incapable of such a sacrifice. We have ridden over moor and mountain, fearless as Amazons, in the chase of the heart or hand of some modern Nimrod, who has bestowed it on some inanimate southern lass, who almost trembled to mount a poney. We have sung ourselves into hoarseness and sore throats, to witch with music, some *brutes*, over whom our harmonies produced less effect than did the sounds of Orpheus on his; and we have turned over albums of our drawings, until our fingers were as tired as our eyes in the operation, yet the amateurs have chosen wives who could draw nothing but their purse-strings. Let us then abandon all active exertions to gain husbands, and leave it to chance."

"Then we shall never get married," said Lady Rosina, poutingly; "recollect that Mr. Desbrow is quite unlike the generality of young men, and though Mademoiselle de Bethune captivated him, without any intention on her part, she might not, nay, would not, have succeeded with the greater number of the men of our acquaintance, who, instead of making love, require to be made love to, and only bestow a portion of their attention on women, in gratitude for having occupied so much of theirs. Men are twenty times more fond of admiration than we are; while we require it only for our persons or accomplishments—they demand it for their fortunes, positions, dress, equipages, horses, and all that is theirs, even to their *want* of accomplishments, of which, many of them are not a little vain, as witness how often we have been called on by some talentless booby, to join in his derision of some man of literary, musical, or conversational powers. while he thanked his stars that *he* was not of such. No, believe me, sister, that it is only by making men in love with *themselves*, that we make them fancy themselves in love with us."

"Suppose," said Lady Madeline, laughing, "that we add swimming to the list of our accomplishments; for you see, how useful a tumble in the river can be made. But I would advise a proficiency in the art of diving in the watery element being acquired, before the nymph tries the experiment, lest her attendant swains possess not the prowess of Mr. Desbrow."

"And so," said Lady Arden, "we have lost the fair Cecile, and, pire que cela, Lord Arlington and Mr. Desbrow, the modern Pylades and Orestes, have followed in her wake. Lord Arlington is a very gifted man, as men go now-a-days, and seemed to bear the absence of la dame de ses pensées, with great patience and resignation. Mr. Desbrow is quite an original and if he fell into the hands of a clever woman something might be made of him; but, la belle Cecile, qui est douce comme un agneau, is not the person to turn the caterpillar into a butterfly, though she bids fair to convert the bachelor into a Benedict."

## CHAPTER VIII.

"The treasures of the deep are not so precious
As the concealed comforts of a man
Locked up in a woman's love."

Each day of Desbrow's stay at Lord Ayrshire's, only served to render him still more attached to Mademoiselle de Bethune. His affections having never been frittered away in casual flirtations, were as fervent as they were fresh and pure, and he loved, as those only can love, who have arrived at maturity without having wasted the powers of their hearts, or blunted the delicacy of their feelings.

A new world opened before him; and Cecile was the enchantress that lent it all its charms. The future, blessed with her,

offered him but one bright vista, and without her, he dared not anticipate it. Nor was such a painful anticipation presented to him; for Cecile, the artless and pure minded Cecile, was too unskilful in the world's wiles, to conceal the preference he had excited in her heart, though that preference was displayed with a delicacy that made it doubly flattering. Desbrow was ever by her side, her drawings were confided to him, she sang and played the simple airs, that charmed away many an evening hour; and he agreed with Lord and Lady Ayrshire, that if her voice wanted science, it amply compensated for it, in sweetness and pathos.

Lord Arlington had joined a party at the moors, for a fortnight, leaving Desbrow the enraptured guest of Lord Ayrshire! and never was there a happier circle than the party quarré, at Ayrshire Abbey, presented.

A few days after Lord Arlington's departure, Desbrow, while riding by Cecile, at a little distance from the Ayrshires, poured into her ear the impassioned tale of his love, and received her blushing consent to confide it to them. But though for many days she had anticipated his avowal, it now agitated her, bringing mixed tears of pain and pleasure to her eyes, and the hand she allowed Desbrow to press within his for a moment, trembled so much in his grasp, that in pity to her embarrassment, he did not attempt to raise it to his lips; and a look beaming with affection, repaid him for his delicacy.

The moment Cecile found herself alone with Lady Aryshire, she threw herself into her arms; and with a shower of tears wept on the almost maternal bosom, that had been through infancy and girlhood, her refuge in joy or sorrow.—She told her of Desbrow's declaration. She wept not alone; for her kind friend, her second mother mingled tears with hers, as she anticipated her separation from the child of her affection, even though such a separation had always been inevitable; but they smiled through their tears, as they looked forward to constant meetings and spending many months of every year together.

Desbrow lost not a moment in laying his proposals before Lord Ayrshire, who warmly congratulated him on the choice he had made. It was agreed on that the Comte de Bethune should be immediately written to. Lord Ayrshire assured Desbrow, that there could be no doubt of his assent, as the proposal had been accepted by them; adding that he should inform Cecile's father, that her suitor was all that a prudent parent could desire for his son-in-law.

The lovers being now considered affianced, and at liberty to mutually reveal their feelings, each day, each hour, added to their attachment, by making known qualities that their increased intimacy developed. In Cecile de Bethune, the fastidious Desbrow found all that his imagination had ever pictured, or his reason approved of, in woman; while the dignified simplicity of his manners, and the high tone of his character and mind, were truly appreciated by her he had chosen.

When Arlington returned from the moors, he was no less surprised than gratified at observing the change in his friend and the cause that led to it; and while congratulating Desbrow, he could not resist demanding of him, if he were not now ready to admit the empire of the sly archer Love whose shafts he had so long escaped.

In due time, a favorable answer arrived from the Comte de Bethune, giving his consent to the nuptials of his daughter, and requesting that, when they had taken place, Mr. Desbrow would bring her to France to visit him.

It was agreed that Desbrow should proceed to London to arrange the settlement with his lawyer, and that the Ayrshires were to follow him with their fair ward, in a fortnight after. But the morning of his departure an express arrived, stating that Mr. Beaumont, the guardian of Desbrow, was dangerously ill, and urging his immediate presence.

We will not dwell on the parting scene between the lovers; the sadness of which was increased by the tidings that had clouded the brow of Desbrow, who was sincerely attached to his guardian, and had prepared Cecile to like him.

All partings are melancholy between those who have sensitive hearts; because they are felt to be the avant couriers of that final parting on earth, when the survivor has the bitterest portion. Desbrow was obliged to summon all his self-command to his aid, when his travelling carriage drove round to the door, and he saw the cheek of his promised bride wear a paler hue, as a pearly tear stole down it. A sweet smile which struggled through tears, as does the sun through the showers of the vernal April, beamed on the lovely face of Cecile, as she offered her velvet cheek to the lips of Desbrow. He then tore himself away from the breakfast room,

astonished at the depth of his emotion, at quitting for only a few days, her who was so shortly to be all his own.

He travelled night and day until he reached the mansion of Mr. Beaumont. An old servant met him in the vestibule; and to his hurried inquiry, answered that his poor master still lived, and was every hour demanding if Mr. Desbrow had arrived. Desbrow followed him to the sick chamber, where, stretched on the bed of death, lay the friend who had long been to him as a parent: his languid eyes. over which the glassy film of death was spread, turned with instinctive impulse to the door of the chamber when it opened; and "is he yet come?" broke from the pale lips of the dying man, as his heaving heart rose with unequal movement, and his struggling breath almost refused to give an echo to his thoughts. His attenuated hands were convulsively plaiting the sheet that was turned over his coverlid, and the damps of death hung on his livid brow. A faint ray of joy illumined, for a moment, his sunken eyes, as they recognised Desbrow; his cold clammy hands returned the warm pressure of his young friend, as he gaspingly murmured, "I knew he would come—I knew he would come to—close my eyes—I am dying—my dear young friend—I have wrestled with death for the last few hours—because I wished to see you before I died—It is now nearly over—but I die as I have lived, an advocate for civil and religious liberty."—

He paused; and a spasmodic pressure of the hand, and a convulsive movement of the muscles, followed by a heavy gasp, and a closing of the languid eye-lids, marked that the last struggle was over; and Desbrow looked on the inanimate remains of him who had, only a moment before, welcomed his approach. He gazed long and attentively on that pale face, on which the impress of earthly passion still lingered; and, as he slowly withdrew from the chamber of death, he prayed that he might never be doomed to witness the closing scene of aught dearer to him in life, since that of his poor friend filled him with such regret.

When the will was opened, it was found that Mr. Beaumont had left the whole of his large fortune to Desbrow, with the exception of ten thousand pounds to her who had clouded the horizon of his life, but who had never been forgotten; liberal provisions to his servants, and large sums for the endowment of a school, into which *only* the children of persons belonging to the established church were to be admitted. A considerable legacy was also bequeathed for the institution of a charity, into which the poor of his estates were to be received, *on condition* that they always voted for their landlord, or the candidate proposed by him. Desbrow sighed, as he read this record of the prejudices of him who died professing his love of civil and religious liberty.

In the desk of Mr. Beaumont was found a letter addressed to Desbrow, instructing him to examine and destroy all his private papers, and with it a small parcel, labelled "Notes from Frances." In lifting this parcel, a paper was discovered, containing a dried rose, almost reduced to dust, with an inscription nearly effaced, stating that it had been given him in June, 1788, by his dear Frances.

Love, disappointed love, was the secret of the misanthropy of poor Beaumont; and how many cases of misanthropy might be traced to similar causes, whose effects influence the lives of those who yield to them, long after the causes have ceased to be remembered. It is only susceptible natures that are liable to this species of infirmity —an infirmity that always springs from disappointed affections—and is therefore entitled to our pity, instead of being, as it generally is, at once the source, and object of censure and calumny.

Desbrow felt a tear dim his eye, as it dwelt on this treasured relic of a first and only love—this only flower—in the wintry life of him who had preserved it; and he never felt so strong a sentiment of attachment towards his departed friend as at this moment, when the mementos of his tenderness of heart were before him. It is by the weaknesses, more than by their strength, that we are drawn towards our fellow-creatures; for, we not only all stand so much in need of pity and forbearance, but are generally so conscious of this necessity, that we find a chord in our hearts, which responds to that in others, when it vibrates beneath the dissonant touch of misfortune.

With what compassion did Desbrow now look back to the movements of misanthropy he had so often witnessed in his poor friend, and grieve that he had not shown a more affectionate forbearance to them! Alas! we often pass our lives with persons whose failings we should be more disposed to pity than resent, could we but know the causes that led to them; but such is our pride, or our mutual want of confi-

dence, that, even in the intimacy of friendship, we rarely lay open our feelings, even to those who could sympathise in them.

Desbrow now found himself the possessor of vast wealth, as the fortune of Mr. Beaumont, joined to his own, rendered him one of the wealthiest commoners in England; but his desires were so moderate, and his former fortune so free from all incumbrances, that his accession gave him little pleasure. He reflected with deep regret that his marriage must now be postponed for some time, as the respect due to the memory of his guardian, who had been a second father to him, demanded this sacrifice.

He wrote to Lord Ayrshire, informing him of the death of Mr. Beaumont, and stating his feelings. He enclosed a letter for Cecile, in which, after pouring forth his whole heart to her, he intreated her to reply to him immediately; and having performed the last melancholy duty to the remains of his deceased friend, he endeavored to beguile the weary hours by fulfilling, to the utmost extent of his power, the intentions of Mr. Beaumont.

Arlington, who had left him on his route from Scotland, had gone to pay a visit at Lord Vavasour's, where the news of Mr. Beaumont's death reached him. Knowing the affection that Desbrow had always entertained for his guardian, and sympathising in the feelings of regret which he knew his loss would occasion him, he wrote to offer Desbrow a visit: but the latter declined it for the present, as he had so much business on his hands, that he wished to finish it ere he left Beaumont Park; and therefore postponed their meeting until the ensuing month in London, where business would require the presence of both.

Desbrow waited with impatience for letters from Ayrshire Abbey; but day after day passed and not a letter arrived. At length a week after the due time when an anwser might have been expected to his letters, he was shocked and alarmed by receiving one with black-edged paper, and bearing all the insignia of death. Terror for some moments prevented his having the power to open it —a thousand fearful thoughts passed through his mind—his hand shook, and a presentiment of some heavy calamity took possession of him; and such was the overpowering effect of his agitation, that when he had torn open the letter, and saw the signature of Cecile, he clasped his hands, and uttered ejaculations of joy and thankfulness that she was safe. He once more took up the letter, and became filled with sorrow, when he perused the few lines, in which the heart-stricken girl informed him that she had lost her second mother—her dear and inestimable friend, Lady Ayrshire—who had been hurried to the tomb by a violent cold, which, terminating in a fever, had, in a few days, put an end to her valuable existence. Lord Ayrshire, she added, was incapable of writing, and she felt nearly unequal to the melancholy task that devolved on her.

Desbrow read the letter over and over again; it was the first he had ever received from Cecile; and a superstitious feeling, which, in his present depressed spirits he could not subdue, stole over him, as he reflected that her first letter was to announce death—a sombre omen, thought he, for the future. The grief under which it was written precluded even the indications of that confidential and authorised affection, which previously to their separation they had so frankly and happily indulged. At each perusal he thought the style still more frigid and restrained, and blamed her for not even by implication referring to their position; forgetful that it was written in the house of death and mourning, and that grief alone occupied her who sent it, chasing away, for the moment, every other feeling.

Is it the presentiment of the brevity of sorrow that makes the mourner adhere with such tenacity to the first indulgence of its violence; when turning from all the consolation that love or friendship can offer, the heart and imagination unite in cherishing the regret that is but the more bitter because it is vain?

Alas! such is our weakness, that even the violence of our emotion exhausts the grief they evince; and we live to feel that the very deepest, truest regret may be subdued by time, though it leaves wounds whose cicatrices are ineffaceable. Who, that has lost an object dear to the affections but has felt the self-reproach, the remorse, with which we turn from the first indications of forgetfulness, as we ask ourselves if it is thus we can forget all that was, and was most dear. Unstable must that mind be, which views not life with an altered eye, after death has snatched from our circle some individual who made its happiness. That confidence in the possibility of the duration of earthly enjoyment, which in itself is happiness, has fled for ever, when we have bent over the cold remains of one we loved; for then, comes the reflection, that so may perish every tie, that binds us to life; and the mysterious chain, by which memory links us to the

loved dead, awakening thoughts which they once shared, precludes our forgetting that the flowers of earth only shade the graves that yawn beneath them.

Desbrow wrote to Cecile, and, from respect to her feelings of grief, suppressed every sentiment foreign to them. How did he wish that he was near her, to share, if not to lighten her sorrow! How did he desire to utter the thousand fond condolences which he could not write! But he dared not intrude on the privacy of Lord Ayrshire at such a moment unbidden; and was therefore forced to restrain his impatience.

In a few weeks, came a letter from Lord Ayrshire, informing him that the Comte de Bethune was daily expected in Scotland, to take Cecile to France; "so not only (wrote the bereaved husband) have I lost *her*, who made the happiness of my life, but I am about to lose Cecile, whom I have so long considered as my daughter. I could have parted with her to you without a murmur; but, I confess, I like not to see her carried away, even by a father, to France, before that nuptial knot is tied, which is to unite for ever her destiny with England. If you dread not to come to the house of mourning, let us see you here, as the sooner you make acquaintance with the Comte de Bethune the better; and I am sure you will wish to bid farewell to Cecile before she leaves England.

"Man proposes, but God disposes, my dear young friend. When we parted a few weeks ago, how anxiously did we all look forward to our next meeting! and *she* whom I have lost, how did she picture a cheerful future, to be passed in constant interchange of visits, at our mutual houses. She has sought 'the narrow house,' and left me, in the winter of life, deprived of the sunshine her presence cast over my existence for so many happy years."

No sooner did Desbrow receive Lord Ayrshire's letter, than he determined to set off for Scotland without delay. A presentiment of impending evil, connected with Cecile's return to France, weighed on his spirits, which he sought in vain to conquer, and he felt dissatisfied with himself at not being able to vanquish this superstitious fancy. With what different feelings did he pursue his journey to Scotland, to those with which he left it a few weeks before. Death had been busy with those near and dear to him in that brief period; and though love still reigned in his heart, grief had sobered down his joyful anticipations, and reminded him of the fearful uncertainty of their realization—an uncertainty, which a few days before, he could not have brought himself to even apprehend. It was impossible to have lived in the same society with Lady Ayrshire, on the terms of cordial intimacy with which Desbrow had been received, without having formed for her a sincere friendship. His love for Cecile had grown beneath her eye, and had been fostered by her motherly encouragement: her benign presence was associated with all that he had yet known of pure happiness, and his regret for her loss was as deep as it was well founded.

## CHAPTER IX.

"Dans la lutte établie entre l'amour et la vanité, il est rare que la victoire ne reste pas à celle-ci."

While Desbrow was pursuing his route to Ayrshire Abbey, his friend Arlington was yielding to the fascinations of the Lady Emily Vavasour, the fair daughter of his host, whose beauty had attracted him, and whose talents and amiability had fixed his hitherto volatile heart.

For some time he was unconscious that any stronger sentiment than a lively admiration, actuated his feelings towards her; for so decided had been his preference for Lady Walmer, and so frequently did the recollection of her obtrude itself on his mind, that he believed his passion for her was still unsubdued, till the anxiety which the marked attention of Lord Mordaunt to Lady Emily, excited in his feelings, soon revealed to him the state of his heart, and he now turned his whole thoughts to the endeavor of securing an interest in hers. The Lady Emily Vavasour to great personal beauty, united talents of no mean order, and a temper as remarkable for its sweetness, as were her manners for their polished elegance. Though an only child, and like all such, brought up in the lap of indulgence, by parents who idolised her, she was as totally unspoilt as if she had been the seventh daughter of a Scotch laird or an English curate. Fondly attached to her parents, she had reached her eighteenth year without having known an hour of sorrow, or a wish ungratified. Her mother, a woman of strong religious principles, had early instilled into the mind of her child, that only sure guide to peace—religion. It was the basis on which her conduct was founded and her hopes built; and its bless-

ed effects were visible in the strict discharge of all her duties, and the peaceful tenor of her life.

The personal and mental superiority of Arlington, over his would-be rival, soon won for him the preference of Lady Emily: and in a short time, he was received by her and her family, as her accepted suitor. He had now the enviable privilege of devoting nearly all his time and attention to his fair betrothed; and each day rendered them mutually more dear. His father approved his choice, and offered the most liberal settlements; and all promised happiness for the future; when, one morning at the breakfast table, Lord Vavasour received a letter, announcing the visit of Lord and Lady Walmer, who wrote to say they were on their route to the Duke of D———'s, and would stay a day or two, at Vavasour Hall.

Nothing could be more unwelcome to Arlington than this rencontre. His first impulse was to leave the house under some pretence or other, and so avoid a meeting with Lady Walmer; but as she was to arrive that day, and that he had received no letters, he could have made no excuse for going away so suddenly that would not have had an extraordinary appearance. So sincere was his attachment to Lady Emily, that it had wholly triumphed over his former passion for Lady Walmer, and it was only from a wish of not giving the latter pain, that he desired to shun an interview which he now felt could no longer have any danger for him. He determined to treat her with marked respect, but to avoid all chances of explanation, or confidential intercourse. A resolution which he concluded it would be almost unnecessary to form, as Lady Walmer would naturally conduct herself towards him with all that cold politeness, which their relative positions required. Still he anticipated the meeting with no pleasurable feelings:—there is always a gaucherie in encountering a person once loved, and to whom the strongest professions of attachment have been made, when that love is transferred to another object. A sense of shame at one's own inconstancy, embarrasses the person vis-à-vis to a former flame, and this sentiment will always be felt in proportion to the inconstant's natural kindness of heart.

"It is strange," said Lady Emily, "that often as Lord and Lady Walmer have been invited here, they never have paid us a visit before, and now come unasked. We are surely more than twenty miles out of the route to the Duke of D———'s, which makes their visit more extraordinary."

"I never before heard you, my dear Emily, make so inhospitable a reflection," said Lord Vavasour, "and we are but the more obliged to the Walmers for coming twenty miles out of their way to give us their company for a day or two."

Lady Emily looked as if she could have well dispensed with the obligation, though had she been asked why, she could hardly have given a reason. The truth was, she felt so happy, that she wished for no change in the circle around her, and least of all, the addition to it of persons with whom she was but slightly acquainted.

During the morning, Arlington felt unsettled and unhinged;; the society of Lady Emily seemed for the first time to fail in occupying his thoughts, which, in spite of him, recurred continually to the expected guest.

How would she receive him? and what would be her opinion at discovering, which she could not fail to do, that the passionate love, professed for herself some ten weeks before, was now transferred to another? And she too, compelled to be a witness to his inconstancy? How unfortunate that she should come! But then, perhaps Lady Walmer had as completely conquered her predilection for him, as he had his, for her. In that case, indeed, all would be well, and friendship and goodwill might take the places of warmer feelings. But no! and here vanity, that self-flatterer, whispered that hers was not a passion to be so soon cured:—and a pang of self-reproach shot through the generous feelings of Arlington as he contemplated her possible chagrin, that almost atoned for the egotism which led him to believe in the continuance of her attachment—a supposed fidelity, which, had he analysed his sentiments, he would have attributed more to the belief of his own merits, than to her stability.

More than once, during the day, Lady Emily, observing his abstraction, rallied him on it, and it required a considerable effort to force himself to reply to her pleasantries.

Lord and Lady Walmer arrived at the hour usually chosen by people of tact to make their appearance in a country house, —namely, that devoted to dressing for dinner; when an arrival breaks in on no one's occupations; and the first interview with the persons composing the society, is in the drawing-room or library, just in

time to permit the greetings of reception, before the maître d'hotel announces that dinner is served. People then appear in fresh garments and fresh looks, take their places naturally, and give just enough excitement, by the mille petits riens et on dit, that new comers have to communicate, to render their presence not merely an addition, but an acquisition to enliven the monotony of a country house. Not so arrive the unsophisticated persons, unblessed with tact, whom some luckless host is compelled to invite to his chateau. A fear of being too late for Lord Rochfort, who is so punctual, induces them to start on their journey three hours too soon, and they drive up to the door, flushed and heated, with uncurled locks and dresses chiffonés, just as the hostess and her guests are about to ascend the carriage for their late morning drive.

The dame du chatean must give up her drive, to remain and act the civil, heartily wishing the new comers twenty miles off; —it is too early for them to dress for dinner, and too late to make a change in their tumbled toilettes.

They hope they do not interrupt Lady Rochfort's drive, and entreat her not to stand on ceremony with them, half an hour after the carriages have driven away; and the poor hostess having offered them refreshments, abandons herself to the interminable and inane remarks of the lady guests, while the husband looks out of the window, and wonders when Lord Rochfort will return from shooting, reminding his wife every half hour, how unnecessary her haste had been, and showing how heavy the pressure of time hangs on his hands, by beating a tattoo on the window frame and tables, by the way of beguiling it. They are too tired to walk, but not sufficiently so to retire to their chambers, to refresh and repose themselves, as their considerate hostess has more than once proposed; and she is only relieved from her thraldom by the ringing of the first dinner bell, when, half dead with ennui, and already heartily tired of her new guests, she seeks the privacy of her dressing room, and vents in yawns, suppressed during the two last tedious hours, her decouragement morale.

Other visitors of the same class, sin in a different way. Afraid to arrive too soon, and be in Lady Rochfort's way, they set out an hour too late; the second dinner bell has rung as they drive to the door, but in rushing to their apartments, they beg the groom of the chambers to assure my lady that they will be ready in fifteen minutes. The message is delivered, not sotto voce, and excites the dismay of all the assembled company, who know what fifteen minutes mean, when imperials, chaise seats, and bonnet boxes have to be taken *down* from the carriage, and *up* to the dressing-rooms, unpacked and huddled on by the cold fingers of a half-frozen lady's maid, nearly dislocated from the motion of the dickey-box or rumble-tumble, and who has forgotten where half the finery most wanted has been stowed away.

Some of the guests are in horror at the anticipation of the spoiled dinner; and others, more fastidious, are shocked at the notion of a fifteen minutes' toilette, after a dusty or dirty road, and being shut up so many hours, when the necessary ablutions alone would require more than that brief period; but all are discomposed, and put out of humour. The pendule on the chimney, is often anxiously regarded; and when thrice fifteen minutes have elapsed, the luckless visitors enter the library, with heightened color, which has divided itself with impartiality, between their noses and cheeks, "making the white one red," and draperies and garnitures as ruffled as their tempers. But here end not the miseries; for, in breathless haste, Madame Mére pours forth an endless volley of apologies, excuses, and demands for pardon. "She is so shocked—so sorry—but the roads were so bad, the post-horses so tired, and they had no idea it was so late." Another quarter of an hour is thus filled up, until the overpowered hostess, and hungry guests, their last remnant of patience exhausted, are summoned to the salle-à-manger, where overdone venison, and tepid or rechaffées entrées, keep alive the resentments of the gourmands, and the displeasure of the lord and lady of the banquet, to the tactless causes of their spoiled dinner.

Never did Lady Walmer look more lovely, than when Arlington's eyes fell on her as he entered the library, and the bright color which tinged her cheek, while he offered his compliments to her, added to her loveliness, as well as to the interest it excited for her in his breast. When her hand touched his, he thought its movement tremulous; though the truth was, the tremulousness was in *his* hand, and not in *hers*. But she was more accurate in her judgment of this point; and from it deduced that her power over him was not yet destroyed. This belief lent a greater softness to her manner; and when their

eyes met, the long and pensive look, which seemed as if it would reach his inmost soul, and expressed all the affection of hers, made him tremble while he turned from its unequivocal tenderness, to seek the mild and less practised glances of his Emily.

At dinner, he was placed vis-à-vis to Lady Walmer, whose varying color, and agitated looks whenever he addressed Lady Emily, by whom he was seated, betrayed the pain she felt; and the consciousness of this, imposed a degree of reserve on Arlington, that rendered his position peculiarly awkward. He had now the conviction that he was still beloved by Lady Walmer; and though good feeling, as well as good sense, prompted the wish that it had not been so; still, vanity, that inseparable companion of the human breast, made him feel a complacency at the conviction, and a warm gratitude towards the object that administered to his self-love. Had Lady Walmer treated him with haughtiness, or indifference, he could better have brooked her presence; but now, could he be so barbarous, so unfeeling, as to wound the heart of a woman who loved him, by attentions to another, which proved the transfer of his affection? No! the restraint could only last two days; she would then depart, and, probably, the unsophisticated Emily, in that short period, would not be aware of the decrease of his attentions.

So reasoned Arlington, during the time of dinner; and though he would have willingly risked wounding Lady Walmer's feelings, in preference to offending Emily, he had not courage to pay the latter any of the countless and nameless acts of prevenance, which she had been for weeks accustomed to receive from him. Every time he turned his eyes to the opposite side of the table, and, truth to say, that was continually, he found those of Lady Walmer fixed on him. Emily being by his side, he could not, without a movement of his head, which would have excited anew the agitation and distress of Lady Walmer, observe the sweet countenance of his affianced wife, or the changes produced in it by his unwonted abstraction and coldness. Had he looked on it, he would have been recalled to a sense of his weakness; but, as it was, he yielded to a false sentiment of pity, springing more from his own vanity, than any other source. When the ladies rose from table, instead of seeking the eyes of Emily, he found himself reading in those of her rival, her thanks for his forbearance: but turning from their too eloquent expression, to catch the retreating figure of Emily, whose languid movements, and dejected air, spoke reproaches to his heart, he ardently pined for an opportunity of again devoting all his attentions to her, free from the jealous observation of Lady Walmer.

## CHAPTER X.

"Half the errors attributed to love have their source only in vanity; and many a woman has made sacrifices to this unworthy passion, who might have successfully resisted the pleadings of affection."

Lady Walmer had perception enough to be aware that her only chance of retaining her influence over Arlington, was to affect a violent passion for him. Bent on this purpose, she became blind to the risks to which the fulfilment of it would inevitably expose her. And here was a proof that vanity sometimes triumphs over pride in woman's heart, as well as in man's. Her preference for Arlington, though the strongest, and perhaps the only permanent one she had ever known, would not have injured her peace of mind, had her vanity not been wounded by his having had the power to fly from her, even at the moment when she acknowledged that he was dear to her. Had he fled in despair at her coldness, she could have borne it; but as it was, it was too mortifying, and she determined, coute qui coute, to win him back, if only to prove to him, that when again at her feet, she could banish him for ever.

Day after day, during the first month of his absence, she expected a letter, breathing repentance for his flight, and intreating to be again restored to her favor; but when week after week passed without a line from him, her indignation knew no bounds. Lady Walmer was incapable of appreciating the character or conduct of Arlington, and consequently misjudged both so completely, as to attribute his flight to a want of affection, derogatory to the power of her fascination; instead of viewing it as a proof of his triumph over himself, in sacrificing his feelinge to her peace.

Some remarks made by Lord Walmer on the sudden departure of Arlington, goaded the irritable vanity of his wife; who having been proud of displaying her conquest, was humiliated that even her husband should think her adorers could thus easily throw off her chains.

Such was the state of her feelings when intelligence reached London, that Arling-

ton was on the eve of marriage with Lady Emily Vavasour. To paint her anger would be impossible; rage, jealousy, and a sense of humiliation filled her breast, and being compelled to conceal her emotions, they preyed but the more deeply on her ill-governed mind. The envious belles, who had disputed with her the conquest of Arlington, now flocked round to comment on his approaching marriage, to repeat a thousand exaggerated tales of his long and devoted passion for Lady Emily; the immense settlements he had offered, and the splendid diamonds he had commanded. His attachment was represented as something quite worthy of the days of romance; and Lady Emily was pronounced by these soi-disant friends of Lady Walmer, a most fortunate woman, to have gained the heart of such a man especially when it was taken into consideration how many women had sought it, by encouraging his attentions. None of this malice lost its effect on her whom it was meant to wound; she felt—poignantly felt it—until it rankled in her very soul, exciting her to sacrifice pride, delicacy, and every feminine feeling of propriety, to the accomplishment of the only scheme that promised a salve to her wounded vanity—that, of again securing Arlington's affections, and showing the envious women, who taunted her, how easily she could make him resume her chains.

But while revolving this plan, she was not forgetful that the eyes of all her clique were upon her; and this weak woman, who was incapable of conquering the feelings of wounded vanity, concealed with a Spartan firmness, worthy of a good cause, the anguish it inflicted. Nay, she affected to be pleased at the marriage; said she had long known of the attachment, for that Lord Arlington had made her his confidant; an assertion that excited an exchange of sundry malicious glances between the ladies composing her audience, none of which escaped her observation, though she pretended not to remark them. She dwelt with exaggeration on the qualities, mental and personal, of Lady Emily, with whom she was but slightly acquainted, and proclaimed that two such amiable and accomplished persons could not fail to be happy.

This ruse imposed on no one, save Lord Walmer, on whom it took entire effect; and he felt much gratified, as the confession of his wife's having been Arlington's confidant, seemed now to explain, most satisfactorily to him, all the causes of their former long interviews and habits of intimacy, which had often excited his surprise, if not his jealousy.

But all was now explained; and feeling more cordially disposed towards his wife than he had been for a long time, he yielded a ready assent to her proposal of accepting an invitation to the Duke of D——, which he had previously nearly determined on declining.

Lady Walmer had felt as little inclination as her lord, to go to the duke's, until she recollected that Lord Vavasour's seat was only twenty miles out of the route, which would furnish her with an excuse for accepting an invitation often given, of staying a few days there. She frankly proposed this visit to her lord, who readily agreed to it, but she determined on not announcing her intention to Lord Vavasour, until she was on the eve of making it, lest Arlington might take flight; as she guessed he could feel no wish of encountering her, under present circumstances.

To win back her recreant knight, and to exhibit him to her clique, was now the end and aim of all this weak woman's plans; and she never paused to ask herself if, in pursuing her schemes, the happiness of the young and amiable Lady Emily, as well as that of Arlington, might not be sacrificed. No! She thought not of them; self, and self only, was consulted, and, for the gratification of her vanity, she was ready to immolate all that opposed its triumph.

Lady Walmer was not naturally a bad hearted or wicked person, and if, a few months before, any one could have foretold her, that she would act as she was now doing, she would have despised the prediction and felt insulted by the prophet; but vanity, her ruling passion, she had never even endeavored to control, and so long had she yielded to its empire, that it now wholly governed her. Instigated by this mean and unworthy passion, which has led more women to ruin than all others beside, she now fearlessly obeyed its dictates, and determined to leave nothing undone to recover her empire over Arlington, who, unconscious of her real character, attributed that to affection, which proceeded from vanity alone; and his own self-love being flattered by it, he pitied what, had he known her real sentiments, he would have despised.

Into how many snares does not vanity lead us, and how often, for the indulgence of that evil passion in ourselves, do we administer to that of others! Had he not been blinded by his own fatuity, he would

have seen that Lady Walmer's present conduct was as inconsistent with true affection as it was with female delicacy; and he would have at once discouraged her impropriety of conduct, by continuing his attentions to her innocent and amiable rival. But men are as prone to believe in the force and durability of the passions they inspire, as are weak women; and hence, are oftener the victims of their vanity than of their affections.

When the gentlemen joined the ladies in the drawing room, Arlington found that Lady Walmer had established a tête-á-tête on a sofa, with Lady Emily; leaving Lady Vavasour and the wife of the rector, who had joined the party, to amuse themselves in a similar manner. This manœuvre precluded the possibility of Arlington's having an opportunity of saying a word in private to Lady Emily, and had been calculated upon, and arranged accordingly, by the wily Lady Walmer.

Nothing could be so disadvantageous to Emily, as the contrast she now offered to her rival, who, elated with the success of her glances at dinner, was blooming and brilliant in beauty, while Emily's cheek wore a paler hue, and her eyes looked languid and heavy, as their downcast lids tried to veil them from the searching gaze of Lady Walmer, who seemed as if she would have read her inmost thoughts. We must, in justice to Arlington, add, that the pallid cheek and heavy eyes of Emily, though thus brought into forcible and disadvantageous contrast with the blooming tint and sparkling eyes of Lady Walmer, never had more attraction for him than at this moment, when they disclosed how deep must be the sentiment of attachment for himself, which could so soon subdue her natural vivacity, and shade the brilliant character of her beauty. Lady Walmer was too quick sighted not to observe the deep interest which the pensive looks of Emily had awakened, and too clever not to try and divert the attention of her lover to some other point; she, therefore, proposed music, and asked Emily to sing, though one glance at her countenance must have betrayed that such an exertion at the present moment would be impossible. A head-ache, that never failing apology for a heart-ache, was offered as an excuse for Emily's refusal; and Lady Walmer proposed to accompany herself on the piano, that Lady Emily might hear one or two new songs, of which she spoke in high terms. Arlington now hoped that while Lady Walmer was singing he might have an opportunity of saying a few words in private to Emily, and, therefore, expressed a desire to hear the song or songs to which she alluded; but no sooner did she rise to go to the piano, than she took the arm of Emily, and, at the same moment, called to Arlington to place the music stool for her.

This behest performed, while she was playing the symphony, he turned to Emily, and with a look, in which the whole tenderness of his heart was displayed, in a low voice, hoped she was not very ill, and that her headache would soon subside. The look and manner that accompanied these words, carried a balm to the feelings of her to whom they were addressed; and she thanked him with one of her sweetest smiles, while replying that she was sure a night's sleep would perfectly restore her to her accustomed health.

Softly as the few words which passed between the lovers had been spoken, they reached the listening ears of Lady Walmer, and excited a jealous rage in her breast, whose intensity surprised her. Admirably, however, suppressing all exhibition of it, she playfully requested Arlington to lead Lady Emily in front of her, adding, that she was foolishly nervous, and never could sing if people were behind her.

When they had complied with her request, and that both were so placed that every glance of hers could command them, she commenced the following song, fixing her eyes on Arlington's face, with an expression of deep melancholy, that well accorded with the plaintive sound of her low-toned and melodious voice, every intonation of which struck reproaches to the mind of Arlington, as she seemed to address him.

"Yes! I have loved thee but too well,
My very soul was giv'n to thee;
But thou'st dissolved the magic spell,
And set my captive fond heart free.

But, as some hapless bird confined,
With pinion long unused to soar,
In liberty no charms would find,
Nor pine to mount in air once more.

So feel I, for this heart was thine,
So long thou did'st its feelings sway;
Its bitterness alone is mine,
For thou hast stol'n its peace away."

To describe the effect of this song upon Arlington, every line of which, was aided by all the expression that the touching voice and beautiful countenance of the singer could give it, would be impossible. He

felt as if every eye and ear in the room must detect in it, all that Lady Walmer meant him alone to comprehend. Nor was he reassured when, stealing a look at Emily, he saw astonishment and pain depicted on every lineament of her intelligent face.

When the song ended, and before Lady Walmer could receive the compliments of the few of her auditors who felt disposed to pay her any, Lady Vavasour left her seat, and approaching her daughter, drew her arm within hers and gently led her from the room. Arlington would have given worlds to have followed them, and to have helped to support the tottering steps of his beloved Emily; but he felt that were he to do so, Lady Walmer was capable of making some scene, which would only serve to compromise herself and him, and, therefore, remained in the saloon.

Lord Vavasour happily relieved him from a tête-á-tête with Lady Walmer, which she had evidently resolved to effect; and that good-natured, but somewhat obtuse man, having complimented her on her voice, lamented the indisposition of his daughter, which, he said, he could in no way account for; as, in general, she was the most healthy, as well as the most cheerful person, in the world; "but," continued the fond father, "all you ladies, on certain occasions, are apt to be agitated,"—here both his listeners looked alarmed—"and the period fixed for the marriage of Emily, and my friend,"—laying his hand affectionately on the shoulder of Arlington—"now draws so near, that one must not wonder if my poor Emily, in the midst of all her happiness, sometimes feels a few pangs at the thoughts of leaving her doting parents. You will forgive this, won't you my dear Arlington? for, be assured, she who feels the most regret at leaving her father's home, will be the most likely to make that of her husband a scene of happiness."

Lady Walmer writhed under the emotions this speech was so well calculated to call forth; and was incapable of any other reply than a bow of assent; while Arlington studiously avoided her glance, feeling unable to support the reproaches he was convinced it would convey.

When Lady Vavasour returned to the saloon, her manner towards Lady Walmer was so coldly reserved, that even Arlington, pre-occupied as he was, could not help being struck with it, and pitied the embarrassment it evidently caused that lady. He approached Lady Vavasour, and expressed his hope that she left Lady Emily better; but a stern look, and freezing reply, that she was doing well, discouraged him from any farther conversation.

The rest of the evening passed away as dully as all evenings do, between people who have few ideas in common, and when no one in the circle has the power or the inclination, pour faire des frais, for amusing the rest.

## CHAPTER XI.

"Les femmes abandonées par l'amour dévotes par necessité méchantes par temperament, et medisantes par envie."

Mrs. Preston, the rector's wife, or lady, as she loved to be called, who had been engaged in private conversation with Lady Vavasour during the evening, had not been an unmindful, or unprejudiced spectatress of the conduct of Lady Walmer during dinner, and the soirée that followed it. She was one of those observant, and loquacious ladies, of which almost every country town offers an example, who are much prone to examine the actions and words of those with whom they come in contact, and to communicate the results of their examinations, with all their comments thereupon. An extreme activity of mind, never turned to any laudable pursuit, left Mrs. Preston ample time and resources, for making herself au fait of all the private histories of every family of her acquaintance; and her visits were received by the ladies of her neighborhood, who happened to have gossipping propensities, with the same satisfaction with which a certain Sunday newspaper is opened by many of its readers, who are dying to see what is said of their intimate friends and acquaintances.

Mrs. Preston had passed her years of maidenhood as dame de compagnie, with the Dowager Marchioness of Chatterwell, where her quick perception of character enabled her to fill the role of critic to the guests, and admirer to the hostess and her daughter, to the full satisfaction of the two latter. By a peculiarity of optics, she saw nothing but defects in the visitors, and naught but perfection in her protectresses; and when the clerical preceptor of the marquis, (the only son of his doting mother,) was to be presented with the lucrative living of Chatterwell, as a reward for his services, the hand of the precise Miss Dunstan was the only stipulation to the gift

proposed by the marchioness, to the luckless prelate.

The Lady Elizabeth was on the point of marriage; the dame de compagnie was to be got rid of handsomely; the preceptor was to be provided for, and the two last points in the programme of the marchioness' plans were to be accomplished by making the living of the parson provide a living for the toady.

They equally disliked each other, but what was to be done?—nothing but to marry, and continue their mutual dislike under the small roof of the rectory, as they had done under the aristocratic one of Chatterwell during so many years.

The Lady Elizabeth was now Countess of Elesmere, a woman of fashion, and would-be beauty, who had disputed the conquest of Arlington's heart with Lady Walmer, and who had never forgiven his preference of the latter. His subsequent departure from London, and the news of his approaching marriage, had gratified her, in the belief that both were highly mortifying to her rival. She it was who had taunted Lady Walmer, by repeating every particular she could learn or invent, relative to the intended marriage; and recollecting that her ci-devant toady was now a near neighbor of the Vavasours, she wrote to acquire all the information she could from her Argus, in return, communicating the former supposed liaison of Arlington and Lady Walmer, with a prohibition not to mention it to Lady Vavasour, which she knew would have precisely the contrary effect, as the mischief-loving propensities of Mrs. Preston were well known to her.

"I hope," (wrote Lady Elesmere,) "that Lord Arlington has entirely conquered his passion for my coquettish friend; but such is her power over him, that I should tremble, were I Lady Emily, to let him come again within reach of this siren."

Lady Elesmere despatched this letter the day she had discovered the intention of the Walmers to stay a few days at Vavasour Castle, on their way to the Duke of D———'s, an intention which her lord heard Lord Walmer communicate to some of his clique at White's, and which Lord Elesmere repeated to his wife. She felt sure, that not only would Lady Walmer find a severe observer in Mrs. Preston, but that all she knew, guessed or feared, would, under the seal of secrecy, be disclosed to Lady Vavasour; who, being a woman more remarkable for severity of morals, than perception of character, or clearness of intellect, was precisely the person most likely to be influenced by such a disclosure, and to make a use of it little calculated to administer to the happiness of the persons most concerned.

All had occurred as the artful Lady Elesmere had foreseen and wished. Furnished with the clue sent in her letter, Mrs. Preston interpreted every glance and movement of Lady Walmer and Arlington into a proof of passed guilt and present attachment. "Her dear, sweet innocent Lady Emily was a victim about to be offered up and she ought, she would save her."

No sooner had she found herself tête-à tête, in a corner with Lady Vavasour, than she began to animadvert on Lady Walmer until, by degrees, she had made her hostess acquainted with all she had heard, suspected or imagined; so that when the song was given, accompanied by the tender glances, and impassioned manner that marked its performance, it seemed to the prejudiced feelings of Lady Vavasour, a convincing proof of the truth of all that she had been hearing for the last two hours.

Observing the effect the song produced on her daughter, she rose as already related, and led her from the room; and it required no little self command on her part to resist expressing her sentiments to Emily; who sought her pillow with that overpowering though vague sense of unhappiness, which oppresses the young and sensitive heart, when it first yields to doubt or suspicion, and admits these insidious passions into the sanctuary where love and confidence had before only been known.

The impassioned glances of Lady Walmer, fixed with such intensity on Arlington, her affianced husband, haunted her imagination; the words of the song, so boldly, so unfemininely, addressed to him seemed still to sound in her ears: and his evident constraint ever since Lady Walmer's arrival, announced to her unsophisticated mind some understanding between them inimical to her peace. Then came the recollection of the visible perturbation of her mother, and the offended air with which she led her from the saloon. All this must have some cause, and her parent must have seen much to disapprove ere she would have been so evidently ruffled. And here, tears, the first that love had ever brought into her eyes flowed in abundance.

Fondly, and entirely, had she allowed herself to love Arlington; and her parents had unreservedly sanctioned the attachment, which a few weeks would have

seen ratified at the altar—but now—and her tears streamed afresh—it was but too evident, another had claims on his heart, and that other a married woman.

The high sense of moral rectitude of Emily was as much wounded as her affection; she had never mixed in any society, but of those whose conduct was irreproachable; had never been initiated into the scandalous histories, which, whether true or false, equally tend to sully the mind accustomed to hear them; hence the shock of seeing her betrothed husband claimed as a lover, by a married woman, inflicted a deep wound on her peace.

She had so often heard Arlington express his abhorrence of vice, and had so frequently found his moral and religious sentiments accordant with her own, that she now shrank from the idea of contemplating him in such a new, such a different point of view; and she passed the first sleepless hours of her life, in weeping over her delusion. And yet, in the midst of bitter thoughts, came the consoling one, that he had not returned the passionate glances of Lady Walmer. No! Emily had observed, with woman's instinctive quickness, that he seemed to shrink from, rather than return them; and this recollection was soothing. Yes; he must love her; he could not forget all the vows they had exchanged, all the plans for the future, they had arranged together. He was too happy before Lady Walmer came, to admit of Emily's doubting that his thoughts reverted to any one but her; and with this consolatory thought, she closed her weary and tearful eyes in slumber.

To a deep sensibility, Emily Vavasour united the rare accompaniment of a most sweet and equal temper; and, though possessed of a degree of feminine softness which might lead superficial observers to conclude that she was deficient in firmness, she was yet, by no means, wanting in that essential quality; a quality as different from its mean substitute, obstinacy, as rashness is from true courage, prudery from virtue, and bigotry from religion.

She felt, even while her heart was agonised at the thought, that she could separate herself forever from Arlington, were she convinced that he was unworthy her affection; but she prayed that this conviction might never be forced on her.

First love in an elevated mind, is pure, as the first breath of the morning zephyr, and beautiful as Hope, ere it has learnt to doubt.

Emily's purity and confidence chased away the doubts that had clouded her mind, as the sun dispels the vapors that would obscure its brilliancy, and she slept the slumber of innocence; that light and peaceful sleep, which never descends on the lids of guilt, and rarely visits those on whom passion has left its burning trace.

Visions of happiness were present to her imagination; Arlington led her through verdant meads, where a thousand fragrant flowers courted her touch; and his voice uttering vows of love, came to her ear, mingled with the joy inspiring notes of innumerable birds. Her father smiled on her, and her mother blessed her. Thus, the pure imagination of this young and charming girl presented to her even in sleep, the images most dear and attractive to her innocent mind.

Lady Vavasour no sooner found herself alone with her lord, which happened not ere they had sought their pillows, than the nuptial couch was made, as it too frequently is, a bed of thorns, by being chosen as the scene of domestic jars, unpleasant disclosures, and painful consultations; hence the alarm entertained by so many bachelors, who renounce the smiles of the saffron-robed god from the bare apprehension of "curtain lectures."

All that Mrs. Preston had stated, relative to Arlington's former passion for Lady Walmer, was now repeated to Lord Vavasour, with the high coloring given by a prudish woman and an affectionate mother, alarmed for the happiness of her only child,

Lord Vavasour had lived much in the gay world, in his youth, and had learned to look on certain liaisons in it, with a charity, little in accordance with the severity of his wife's principles; so that a difference of opinion often arose between them, which, the laxity of his notions, and the over prudishness of hers, rendered as dangerous to harmony, as it was unavailing to carry conviction to the mind of either. The first pause which the volubility of Lady Vavasour allowed, was filled up by her lord bursting into a laugh, and exclaiming,

"Stuff!—nonsense! my dear, how can you listen to such gossip? How like that interfering busybody, Mrs. Preston, to come here and fill your ears with tales of forgotten scandal! Do you suppose that Arlington, a fine, handsome young man, mingling in certain cliques, where certain attachments are, if not openly acknow-

ledged, at least tacitly tolerated, has been living like a saint?"

"Really, Lord Vavasour, it is quite dreadful to hear you talk—you, a husband and a father, making light of conduct the most reprehensible, the most wicked!"

"Well, well, after all, my dear, recollect that when you married me, I did not pass for a saint; nay, I verily believe I was considered one of the greatest sinners about town; and yet, I do not think I have made a bad husband."

This appeal touched a tender chord in the feelings of Lady Vavasour; and candor and affection both led her to admit, that, if her husband's theory sometimes tempted him to "make the worse appear the better cause," in practice, his conduct had been irreproachable; and this opportune recollection somewhat softened the severity of her strictures on the supposed guilt of Arlington.

Her more pacific tone produced a correspondent effect on her lord; and he begged her not to hint a word of what she had heard to Emily, while he promised to keep an observant eye on the conduct of their intended son-in-law."

"If it be true," said Lord Vavasour, "that Arlington has had an attachment to Lady Walmer, and, as is supposed, that it was reciprocal, there is no reason to imagine that, if it still continued, he would seek the hand of our daughter; and to make him now suffer for passed folly, would be unreasonable."

"There now, my dear," interrupted Lady Vavasour, "you do so provoke me by calling guilt—serious, dreadful guilt—folly. Have we not cause to tremble for the future happiness of our good, our innocent child, if we commit her to the keeping of a man who has indulged a passion for a married woman?"

"But this attachment may, and, we ought to hope has been unattended with guilt," replied Lord Vavasour; "Arlington may have seen his danger in time, and avoided it; look at the fair side of the picture, my dear, and let us believe that, in half the liaisons to which guilt is attributed, *the appearance* only exists."

Lord Vavasour tried to think as he spoke; but now, that all Mrs. Preston's tales were supported by the evidence of his wife's personal observation, and, indeed, by his own late-awakened consciousness of something strange and embarrassed in Arlington, as well as something indescribable in Lady Walmer's manner, he felt a suspicion that all was not right, though he would not admit his apprehension to his wife. He determined to observe them narrowly, and, perhaps for the first time of his life, fell asleep with the painful sensation of mistrusting a person he had been accustomed to esteem.

It rarely happens that even the most innocent can escape, when their actions are viewed through the medium of suspicion, which, like jealousy, gives its own coloring to every object on which it reflects. In such cases, persons imagine they are only examining, when they have already condemned, because they go to the trial with excited susceptibilities, predisposed to find the suspected, guilty.

## CHAPTER XII.

"C'est le propre des passions d'altérer le jugement, et de nous faire perdre ce sens droit qui nous montre les choses sous leur véritable aspect."

When the party met at breakfast, the next morning, the marked coldness of Lady Vavasour's manner towards Lady Walmer, and the embarrassment that coldness evidently occasioned to her who was the object of it, enlisted all the sympathy of Arlington on her side. She was now an object of pity to him—a dangerous position for the pitier, at least, if not for the pitied—and conscious that she had placed herself in the present humiliating situation, through a misplaced affection for him, (though he would willingly, gladly have dispensed with it,) still he felt himself bound to bestow more attention on her, now that there was a visible diminution of it on the part of her host and hostess.

The constrained politeness of the Vavasours, so different to the empressment which she had been accustomed to see evinced towards her, piqued the pride of Lady Walmer, and a desire of avenging herself on them, was soon added to her selfish wish of winning Arlington again into her chains:—to such lengths can vanity and egotism push their heartless votaries, who begin by being only weak, and end by being wicked.

Emily entered the breakfast-room, with renewed hopes of happiness, and restored confidence in her lover. A refreshing slumber had brought back the roses to her cheek, and animation to her countenance; a bright sunshine illuminated every object that met her gaze, and its exhilarating effects made themselves even more

evident on her youthful frame and elastic spirits, than on the trees and herbage on which it shone, imparting to each a thousand brilliant hues.

She smiled at her foreboding fears of the evening before, and was angry with herself for having yielded to them for a moment; it was an injustice to Arlington for which she longed to make him amends; and, after all, what had she observed, at which she had a right to be dissatisfied? Nothing. Lady Walmer, it is true, kept her eyes fixed on Arlington all the evening; and her manner of appearing to address her song exclusively to him, was peculiar, and had wounded her; but it might be only her general manner; she was perhaps one of those coquettish persons of whom Emily had read, more than observed, and Arlington being the only young man present, she had played off her propensities on him. It could be nothing else! and again she blamed herself for having been made unhappy.

All this passed through the pure mind of the lovely and amiable girl, as she performed the duties of her simple, but elegant toilette de matin, to which she gave even more than her accustomed attention; determined, with a woman's latent feeling of vanity, to wear her best looks, as an amende to her lover, for having worn her worst, the previous evening.

The pale cheek, and languid eye of Emily, had often been present to Arlington's imagination during the night: he loved her more fondly than ever, for those proofs of her affection, and reproached himself bitterly for having called them forth. He entered the breakfast-room, determined to resume all his wonted attention to her, and little disposed to bestow any portion of it on Lady Walmer; when the ill-judged display of coldness, almost amounting to incivility, of the host and hostess to her, and their constrained manner towards himself, completely changed the current of his feelings, and piqued him into a display of attention towards her, that would, otherwise, have never been paid.

Lord Walmer, who appeared totally unconscious of all that was passing around him, having happened to look at his wife, observed aloud, that he had never seen her look so pale; and with his habitual good-nature, hoped she was not ill. This drew from the lady an avowal, that she had not closed her eyes during the night; and a stolen glance at Arlington—which was duly noted by Lord and Lady Vavasour—implied that he was the cause, which so vexed them, that they could not force themselves to utter the usual regrets, or expressions of interest, always used on such occasions—an omission, which excited the displeasure of Arlington, and induced him to redouble his civilities.

Lady Walmer having remarked the night before, how much the paleness, and air abattu, of Emily, had increased the interest of her lover for her, determined to emulate these indications of sensibility. With her it was easily done; she had only to leave off the rouge, which daily lent her cheek its bright tint, and assume a languid air, and the metamorphosis was complete. It might have been lost on Arlington, who was determined not to look at her, had not the observation of Lord Walmer drawn his eyes to her face, and her unusual pallor struck him with pity, little judging its cause.

It was at this moment that Emily entered glowing with health and beauty, animation sparkling in her liquid eye, and playing on her rich lips, which parted with smiles as she replied to the various inquiries of interest end affection, that met her at every side.

"I am quite well, thank you; never slept better; and awoke as if I had never had a head-ache:" were the answers to all; and a sweet smile, and cordial shake-hands to Arlington, set his mind at rest as to *his* having wounded her peace the night before.

Perhaps there was a lingering feeling of vanity in the sentiment of disappointment, with which he heard her avowal of perfect health, and marked her appearance of gaiety. Then, after all, she did not love him as well as he had fancied, and the indisposition of the night before had nothing to do with him. No! it was the unfortunate Lady Walmer who was to be pitied, and who was placed in her present painful humiliating position, through her uncontrollable affection for him.

All these thoughts rushed through his mind, and the result was, that he showed much more attention to the unworthy coquette, than his engagement with Emily ought to have allowed; and the dear innocent girl, determining to atone for her suspicions of the previous evening, made an effort to maintain her cheerfulness during the repast, and succeeded so well, that she never appeared more beautiful, or more brilliant in the eyes of all around her.

Lord Walmer announced his intention, after breakfast, of leaving Vavasour Castle

the next morning, and the faint opposition to the measure expressed by its owners, struck even him, as being most inhospitable, though his obtuseness generally prevented his remarking many things, which must have been observed by others.

Much as Arlington wished them gone—and he sincerely desired it—yet he was shocked at what he considered the rudeness of Lord and Lady Vavasour, and he felt increased pity for lady Walmer, at the gaucherie of her position.

A drive to view some picturesque site in the neighborhood, kept the ladies together, under mutual constraint, until the first dinner bell sent them to their dressing-rooms; and a dull dinner, unenlivened by a single effort at gaiety, except on the part of Emily, who vainly tried to dissipate the general gloom, was followed by as dull an evening; for each, and all, felt under a restraint.

Lady Vavasour sent Emily to her dressing-room for her salts, to relieve a headache; and Arlington eagerly seized an opportunity of quitting the room a moment after. He met Lady Emily descending the stairs, and the mutual restraint both had undergone for the last two days, made them feel this meeting with double pleasure. Arlington drew her arm within his and pressing her hand to his heart and then to his lips, repeated those vows of affection, which were so gratifying to the artless girl.

"Dear, dear Emily," said he, "how long have the two last days appeared to me, and how blissful is it to meet you again alone, even for a few minutes."

"I too have thought them long," replied Emily, as, with a look beaming with confidence and affection, she fixed her mild eyes on his.

"Bless you, dearest! for the avowal," said Arlington; and again and again the little white hand that rested within his, was pressed to his lips. "Tell me, my own Emily, that you, like me, look forward with delight to the happy future, when, united in the indissoluble bonds of marriage, we shall never be separated?"

"Yes, dearest Charles," said the blushing girl, "all my wishes—all my hopes—are centered in the happy prospect of being your wife; and except that I must leave my father and mother"—and here a tear trembled in her eye—"I should be too happy. But let us go to my mother; see"—holding up the flacon of salts—"how you've made me forget her already."

Again was her hand pressed to the lips of her lover, as she tried gently to disengage it; and never did he feel so passionately and devotedly attached to her as at this moment, when hope whispered, "In a few days, this charming and pure-minded creature will be your wife."

When they entered the saloon, the eyes of Lady Walmer flashed with rage and jealousy, as she marked the expression of happiness in their countenances; but Arlington was too joyous to think of her, or if he did for a moment, it was only to rejoice that the next day she would be no longer present to interrupt his felicity. He felt that never had Emily been so dear to him as at this moment, and his indifference to Lady Walmer had grown almost into repugnance.

At length the soirée which had dragged so heavily along, drew to its close; and as the ladies rose to leave the drawing-room, Lady Walmer found means to slip a note into the hand of Arlington.

On going to his room, he read the following lines, almost illegible, from the trembling of the hand that traced them.

"It is necessary, for my peace of mind, that we meet once more, where I can speak to you without witness or interruption—no place offers itself, but my dressing-room; so come there, as soon as you have perused this."

The first impulse of Arlington was to decline the interview; but then came the reflection, that she would sit up expecting him; and this avoidance of her would appear ungrateful, and unkind.

He reflected a quarter of an hour, his mind in a chaos of agitation, when at length he came to the resolution of writing to her, and leaving the letter at her door.

He wrote a hurried and almost incoherent letter, in which he avowed his love for, and engagement to Emily, and the impossibility, under such circumstances, of having a clandestine interview with her who demanded it.

Feeling the necessity of candor, and actuated by the hope that his confession might excite the better feelings of Lady Walmer, he opened his whole soul to her, and his passion for her rival was exposed with all the fervor which his pen could give it. He prayed her to pardon his past folly and presumption, in having sought to win her pity to a passion unworthy of her purity; and bidding her farewell, assured her of his eternal friendship, and respect.

He took this letter to the door of her

dressing-room, tapped gently at it, intending when it was opened, to place the letter in her hand, and retire; but at the moment she appeared at the door, footsteps were heard advancing, light flashed along the corridor, and Lady Walmer, grasping his arm, pulled, rather than led him into the room, and, with trembling hands again fastened it.

She had scarcely done so, when the voice of her husband, demanding entrance threw both Arlington and herself into a state of agitation difficult to be imagined. To push Arlington behind the window-curtain, and open the door, was the work of a moment, and her despair may be conceived, when she saw Lord Walmer, en robe de chambre, place himself at full length on a sofa, a position indicating his intention of not soon quitting it.

"Well, my love, have you observed how very coldly, not to say uncivilly, the Vavasours have behaved to us?" asked Lord Walmer.

"I have not paid much attention to them," replied the agitated wife, (whose heart throbbed violently, while she endeavored to conceal her emotion,) "they are very dull people, and shocking bores."

"You must except Lady Emily," said Lord Walmer, "for she is as agreeable as she is beautiful. Arlington is a happy dog, to get such a wife; every man in London will envy him!"

Lady Walmer felt enraged that Arlington should hear such warm commendations of Emily, and jealousy and envy sent their pangs to her heart.

"How fondly attached she seems to him," resumed Lord Walmer; "I have caught those beautiful eyes of hers, fixed on his face fifty times since we have been here, with an expression of such deep tenderness as I never saw before, and then withdrawn, as if fearful of being observed."

Lady Walmer writhed at every word her husband uttered.

At this moment, her lap-dog, Medore, who had been asleep, awoke by the voice of Lord Walmer, ran from under the sofa, and begun barking violently.

"Hang that dog! what the deuce is the matter with him?" said Lord Walmer.

"Nothing, nothing!" replied Lady Walmer, terrified lest the dog should approach the window; "Medore, Medore, be quiet!" but in vain were her calls to the dog; he barked still louder than ever, and ran round the room, continually approaching the window. Her heart almost died within her when Lord Walmer rose, and walked towards it, exclaiming, "Don't be frightened—there is a cat or something here."

"No, no!" said Lady Walmer, seizing his arm, "there is nothing there; let us drive Medore out of the room;" and she attempted to catch the dog.

"Depend on it," said Lord Walmer, "there is a cat behind that curtain, for you see Medore always runs towards it —nay, I'm sure I saw it move. Do not be alarmed," observing her agitation; "I shall soon see what is there."

"Oh, do not!" said Lady Walmer, gasping with terror, and holding him by the arm.

"Why my love, this is quite childish; I never saw you nervous before," said the husband; but at this moment the dog ran behind the curtain, barking more violently than ever, and Lord Walmer, breaking from the grasp of his wife, pursued Medore, and lifting the curtain—beheld Arlington!

To convey a description of the expression of the countenance of each of the trio, would be impossible. Arlington attempted to speak, but Lord Walmer interrupted him, by saying,

"All explanation, my lord, is now unnecessary. Your concealment behind that curtain, and this lady's anxiety to prevent my approaching it, explains all. For you, madam," casting a glance of anger and contempt at his wife, "you see me now for the last time; I prohibit you from ever again addressing the husband you have betrayed and dishonored; and the laws of my country shall soon dissolve the ties that unite us."

He approached the door to leave the room, but Lady Walmer clung to his arm.

"Oh, leave me not! do not abandon me, I implore, I intreat of you!" cried she in agony; "I am innocent, indeed I am innocent!"

"Dare you make such an assertion, after the discovery I have made?" said the enraged husband. "No, madam, I am no longer your dupe;" and so saying, he scornfully freed himself from her grasp, and left the chamber.

Lady Walmer sank fainting on the sofa; and Arlington, nearly as overcome as herself, was almost incapable of administering her any assistance. He felt as if in a fearful dream; the occurrences of the last few minutes seemed to comprise hours of torture; and as his eyes fell on the insensible form of her who had caused all this mischief, he turned from her with a sensation

almost approaching to loathing. The future—the gloomy, interminable future—seemed unfolded to his prophetic gaze, and Emily, his promised bride, was never loved with such intense passion, as at this moment, when he felt there was an impassable barrier placed between them for ever.

On coming to her senses, Lady Walmer shuddered when her eyes fell on Arlington. There was an expression of despair on his brow that alarmed her, and she hardly dared to meet his glance.

"Is there no hope?" she at length exclaimed; "Can you not go to him, and convince him of my innocence?" but the last word expired on her tongue, as conscience whispered her how faulty, how odious, had been her conduct.

"But how account for my being concealed in this room?" asked Arlington.

"True, true," uttered she in agony, "all, all is lost, and I am wretched for life!"

Had she said *we*, instead of *I*, he might have pitied her; but, seeing her wholly engrossed by self, he remembered with bitterness, that *she* was the cause of all this wretchedness. An intuitive feeling of what was passing in his mind, rushed through hers, and, turning from him, she exclaimed, "Leave me, leave me! would that we had never met!"

Arlington seized a pen, and unable to trust himself to speak, he wrote a few hasty lines, saying, that though the unwilling cause of her misfortune, he was willing to lighten or share it, and should wait her further commands. He placed this note on the table before her, and silently withdrew;—being himself, and leaving her, a prey to the most bitter regret for the past, and the most fearful forebodings for the future.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Quand on a pu dire: J'ai un ami! qu'il doit être affreux ce mot: Je l'ai eu!——

It is long since we left Desbrow pursuing his melancholy journey to Ayrshire Abbey, and not even the anticipation of seeing his beloved Cecile could cheer his depressed spirits.

He arrived late in the evening, and as he looked from his carriage while it wound through the park, the leafless trees, through which the wind mournfully whistled, as in fitful gusts it shook their branches, or scattered the dead leaves in the air, seemed in harmony with his sombre feelings.

How lately had he passed through this park, when, gay in verdure, the trees wore their leafy honors and innumerable feathered choristers sent forth their glad notes. The amiable and excellent mistress of those domains was then in high health, glad and gladdening all around her: but where was she now? in the grave—over which the night winds sighed her requiem. The lamps threw a lugubrious gleam over the train of servants in deep mourning, that lined the hall; and their serious faces showed that their mourning was not merely external. He was told that the Marquis and Mademoiselle de Bethune were in their dressing-rooms, and he hastened to change his dress.

The duties of the toilette performed, he entered the library, and found himself in the presence of Cecile, Lord Ayrshire and a stranger, whom he concluded to be the father of his betrothed.

The meeting was almost a silent one, for all were unable to express the feelings with which their hearts were overflowing. The thoughts of each were with the dead; and they dared not trust themselves to express them but by affectionate pressures of the hand.

The marquis, after a few minutes had restored him to composure, presented Desbrow to the Comte de Bethune, who advanced ceremoniously, and, a la Francaise, offered to embrace him; while Desbrow, unaccustomed to this Gallic habit, drew back astonished, and held out his hand, a l'Anglais, which the comte coldly touched, evidently piqued at Desbrow's manque d'usage, as he considered it.

Cecile had never appeared so beautiful to the eyes of her lover, as at this moment; her deep mourning, contrasted with the exquisite fairness of her complexion, and the pensive expression of her lovely face, had something so calm, yet touching in it, that during several minutes he could not take his eyes from her. Grief seemed to have lent her beauty a purer, higher character; and resignation rendered that grief almost holy.

When Desbrow did look from her, he was struck by the change in the appearance of Lord Ayrshire; he seemed as if ten years had been added to his age; his cheeks were hollow, his eyes dim and swollen, his shoulders bowed, and his whole person was emaciated.

His next glance fell on the Comte de

Bethune, who might have served as the type of a French nobleman of l'ancien régime;—tall and thin, with great personal beauty, yet, with a cold and repulsive countenance, and a manner, from which dignity and studied politeness seemed to have excluded cordiality.

Dinner was announced, while yet Desbrow was making his mental observations on the comte; and Lord Ayrshire, placing the hand of Cecile, within that of her lover, led the way to the salle-à-manger.

The now vacant place, which Desbrow had seen so often filled by Lady Ayrshire, renewed the feelings of all three;—there was the same room, the same plate—servants, all was as in past times, but *her* presence was wanted, who had been wont to spread happiness around.

The repast would have been a silent one, but for the comte, who expatiated with a culinary erudition, that would not have shamed Grimrod de la Reynière himself, on the different entrées and entrêmets, the fumets of the gibier, and the comparative merits of the grouse, ptarmegan, and black cock, with the coq de bruyere, and gelinotte, always according the preference to the gibier of his own favored country, which none of the present party were disposed to dispute.

The wines of France then engrossed his conversation, and he dwelt with pleasure on their acknowledged superiority, naming those which ought only to be *tasted* in order to prepare the palate for some other still more rare vintage, and those which might be *drunk*.

Though his incessant bavardage was a relief to the circle, by preventing the necessity of their conversing, an effort to which each of the trio felt themselves to be incapable, yet, it left the impression on their minds, of how obtuse must be *his* feelings who could thus show so little respect to theirs; and Desbrow saw the blush of shame mantle the pale cheek of Cecile, as her timid eye turned to observe the impression made on him by her father.

There is perhaps, no situation more painfully embarrassing, than that in which persons are placed, when witnessing the display of the obtuseness or want of tact of near relations, before those on whom they are anxious that a favorable impression should be made.

Cecile felt this keenly, and the more so as her deep regret for Lady Ayrshire rendered her almost indignant that her loss should be so little lamented by one who owed so much to her kindness, and that one, her parent.

Lord Ayrshire and Desbrow sympathised too truly in her feelings, not to be aware of what was passing in her mind, and both felt as if drawn still more fondly towards her, by observing all she suffered by her father's want of feeling.

When Cecile had withdrawn, and left the gentlemen to themselves, the comte made what he considered a complimentary speech to Desbrow, on his good fortune in having secured the hand of a young lady, of whom, although his daughter, he must be permitted to say, any man might be proud.

Desbrow warmly assented, but when the comte added, the advantages to be derived by Desbrow's entering into one of the most noble and distinguished families in France, his assent was merely given by a bow; which the comte evidently considered a very insufficient mark of acknowledgment, as he quickly showed, by saying in a tone of pique, that for his part had he only consulted his own feelings, he must, notwithstanding his high opinion of Monsieur Desbrow, have preferred seeing his daughter allied to some one of the noble families of his own country, all of whom would doubtless be anxious to lay their honors at her feet, than to have her married in England.

This speech merited no flattering reply, and received none, for Desbrow felt that the only objection which ever presented itself to his mind, when he first loved Cecile, was the circumstance of her being of another country; an objection that he quickly forgot, when her qualities came to be known, and which he had never since remembered until it was now so disagreeably obtruded on his attention.

Lord Ayrshire saw the danger of allowing the comte to continue the conversation much longer in the same strain, and endeavoured to turn it, by expressing his regret that he could not prevail on the Comte de Bethune to pass a few months with him, that the marriage of Cecile might take place in Scotland, adding, "I shall be so solitary, that it would be a charity to stay with me."

"It is quite impossible, my dear lord," replied the comte; "les convenances,"—that first essential in the code of a Frenchman, and before which all others give way—"preclude my daughter remaining under your roof, now that her cousin is no more; and demand that Mademoiselle de Bethune should be presented to the court

of France, before she changes her name. She has many relations, all anxious to renew their claims on her attention; and the period allotted for her mourning, cannot be better employed, than in cultivating an acquaintance with her country, and distinguished connections—Monsieur Desbrow" bowing to him—" will, I doubt not, see the propriety of this measure; and also, that of having the nuptial knot tied in France; as the marriage of a Bethune ought not to be celebrated elsewhere than capital where her ancestors have filled such distinguished situations."

The pompous airs of the comte seemed equally repugnant to Lord Ayrshire, as to Desbrow; both felt his presence a restraint on them, and were glad when coffee was announced to interrupt his harangues.

During the evening, the comte seemed determined on saying, or doing, whatever was most likely to wound the peculiarities of Desbrow: on each of these occasions, Cecile would cast a beseeching look at her lover, who instantly checked the reply that rose to his lips, and her eyes thanked him for the forbearance, more eloquently than words could have done.

Never had Desbrow passed the hours so heavily at Ayrshire Abbey, as on this evening. To revert uninterruptedly to past happiness, would have been luxury to the state of restraint in which he felt himself placed: but at length, Lord Ayrshire, taking compassion on his visible uneasiness, proposed a party of picquet to the comte, which left the lovers at liberty to converse together for an hour, at the other side of the room.

Their first words were spent in deploring the loss of Lady Ayrshire. Before them was her chair, placed near the small table appropriated to her use, and which still wore its wonted appearance. The vase, filled with flowers; her books, paper-knife, smelling-bottle, and pencil, were all as when she had used them; as her Lord had requested that they might not be touched.

Her portrait, a striking likeness, hung nearly over the chair, she used to occupy, and seemed to wear her own benignant smile, as if regarding the loved objects around her.

Cecile pointed out all this to Desbrow, knowing that he could sympathise in the feelings they awakened; and still further excited his regret and reverence for the dead, by telling him how kindly and affectionately he had been named by her, in her last hours. " I know that you will bear with my father's peculiarities," said Cecile; " he has never lived much in England, and has certain prejudices, that we must rather sooth than irritate. I am too English, not to feel this, and not to be aware how it must strike you; but. I hope, I trust, you will bear with him."

What would not Desbrow have borne with, to be so intreated! and he felt at the moment, the promise he repeated, that she might count on his submitting to any thing, or everything, rather than give her a moment's pain.

Both felt happier after this conversation, and to prove its beneficial results on him, Desbrow became more attentive to the Comte de Bethune, and did all in his power to cultivate his good opinion.

The second day he ventured to express his regret, that the brother of Cecile had not accompanied his father to England; and repeated his desire to become known to him.

"These are not times," replied the comte, " moncher Monsieur Desbrow, for a military man to quit his post; my son will be always found near his sovereign, who has, alas! but too much occasion for devoted adherents, to stem the tide of popular disaffection, which threatens to overset his throne, and destroy his kingdom."

" We must hope," said Lord Ayrshire, " that France is not in so dangerous a state as you think."

" Would that it were not!" said the comte; " but daily experience proves, that unless Charles X. has firmness enough to adopt the measures recommended to him by those who have the sense to oppose themselves to the overwhelming flow of anarchy, which, under the name of liberal principles, aims at oversetting the throne, and the altar, all must be lost. The press, must be put down, Monsieur Desbrow, or it will put us down; but, luckily, the king has now those around him, who are devoted to l'ancien règime, and determined to oppose the encroachments of the liberals."

Lord Ayrshire saw by the heightened color, and flashing eye of Desbrow, that he was on the point of giving vent to the feelings which the speech of Comte de Bethune excited; and giving him an expressive look, to deprecate any remonstrance, he hastened to change the subject.

When Desbrow found himself alone with Lord Ayrshire, the latter spoke to him as follows:

" I am aware, my dear friend, that such is your affection for Cecile, that your happiness depends on a union with her; if, therefore, you wish that nothing should occur to oppose this union, beware of of-

fending the political, religious, or national prejudices of her father. With many good qualities, he is full of prejudices, and untolerating and unforgiving to those who offer any opposition to them; bear with him, for argument is useless—nay worse—would only lead to disagreement, in which your happiness, and that of Cecile, may be compromised. I wish your marriage could have taken place in England; and so wished my dear lost wife; for, knowing the character of Comte de Bethune, as I do, I like not the idea of our dear Cecile being confided to one, who, though her father, is so uncongenial to her in every respect; but, it cannot be helped, and we must only hope the best, and avoid every possible occasion of offending the too susceptible comte. Cecile is ill at ease with him; he is jealous of her affection for me, and her attachment to England, and all that is English: this feeling breaks forth continually, but she bears it admirably; we, my dear friend, must take care not to add to her sufferings, by exciting his displeasure, which is but too easily aroused on the most trivial subjects, where his prejudices are touched, and they are continually on the qui vive."

Desbrow felt the justice of Lord Ayrshire's counsel, and the friendship which dictated it, and he promised to follow it strictly: a resolution which it required no little self-command to fulfil, as scarcely an hour passed, in which Comte de Bethune did not try his forbearance to its utmost extent, by the display of illiberality, and prejudices, more suited to the Feudal system of l'ancien régime, of which he was always lamenting the suppression, than the enlightened views of the nineteenth century.

But well was Desbrow repaid for his forbearance towards the father, by the affection and confidence of the charming daughter, who became every hour more dear to him, as her inestimable qualities became more known. Her touching attention to Lord Ayrshire, endeavoring to anticipate his wishes, and to supply the place of *her* he had lost; her sweetness, and patience, under all the wayward humors of her father, and the tact with which she soothed them; but above all, her frank, yet modest manner of marking her affection for himself, enchanted her lover, and there was no personal sacrifice that he would not willingly have made, to insure her happiness.

Desbrow wished much, that the Comte de Bethune should see one, or both of his estates, and consulted Cecile, on the propriety of engaging him to visit them; but the blush that rose to her cheek as she hesitated to reply, told him *she* wished it not.

After a moment's silence, she looked affectionately in his face, and thus addressed him: "It is painful to expose, even to the one most dear to us, the foibles of a parent; but yet, you are so good, and so forbearing, that I may remind you, that my poor father lost an immense fortune by the Revolution; his chateaux, estates—all were confiscated: and when he sees, or is engaged to see, the mansions and domains of others, he reverts with bitterness to those he once possessed, and becomes soured by the reminiscence. He is proud, very proud, which we must forgive, when we reflect that it is his present comparative poverty that makes him so; for all who knew him in his splendor, declare that he was then, free from this weakness. He suffers acutely at the idea of my going to you a portionless bride; and the sight of your residences might only awaken painful feelings."

It was thus, that Cecile each day softened the asperities of her father and lover, and rendered herself each hour dearer to the latter. Upon her parent too, she must have produced a similar effect, but that all his affection, and what was still much stronger, his pride, were centered in his only son, the supporter of his ancient name, and the inheritor of the titles, and the dilapidated part of the fortune of his ancestors, which the indemnity had restored to him. This son was his idol, the constant subject of his conversation, and referred to on all occasions, as one, from whose opinion there was no appeal.

There is something in the natures of even the best persons, which induces them to hear with distaste, if not doubt, the continued praises of some one unknown; and when the Athenians banished Aristides, because they were tired of hearing him called "The Just!" they were true to that alloy in human nature, which turns with disgust from praise bestowed on another, however well merited. A woman, held up as a beauty before seen, is sure to appear less handsome (however beautiful she may be) to those who have been hearing exaggerated descriptions of her; and virtue and talents, extravagantly praised, are apt to engender doubt of their existence or disinclination towards their possessor.

Lord Ayrshire, with all his good nature, became tired of hearing the excellence, mental and personal, of Auguste de Bethune, who, if his partial father was to be believed, was a second Admirable Crich-

and as Desbrow too, found himself, malgré lui, rather unfavorably disposed towards the "faultless monster," who was "magnificent, as handsomest, wisest, virtuous men."

Cecile felt disposed to render her brother justice. She remembered with fondness the fine, impetuous, high-spirited boy, with curly locks, brilliant eyes, and inexhaustible gaiety, who was always either quarrelling with, or kissing her, when they met as children; and though a long period had now elapsed since she had seen him, she felt all a sister's partiality, though she had sufficient tact and perception, to wish that her father praised him less frequently and extravagantly.

It was difficult for Desbrow to command his temper, when he heard the Comte de Bethune find fault with Cecile's deportment and mode of walking, observing, "C'est bien Anglais, je vous demande pardon, messieurs, mais nous changerons tout cela à Paris." Her toilette and tournure were also censured by her fastidious father, who repeated his longing desire that she might profit from the taste and address of the Parisian modistes.

Now, Desbrow was justly proud of the tournure of Cecile, which was peculiarly elegant and dignified; and her toilette, which was always simple, yet well chosen and becoming, fully met his approbation; so that he could with difficulty restrain his impatience, when he heard the tasteless comments of the Comte. But an appealing look of intreaty from her, silenced the defence that was rising to his lips, and which could not have failed to offend her father; and he contented himself with feeling an increased admiration for all that the Comte disapproved.

The presence of Comte de Bethune, imposed a restraint on the three persons with whom he was thrown, that was every hour more painfully felt. Lord Ayrshire kindly endeavoured to occupy him for an hour or two in the evening, at picquet or chess, during which time Desbrow, seated by Cecile, was consoled for the constraint he had endured during the long day; but so quickly flew the moments near her, that the interminable hours passed in the society of her father, seemed of endless duration by the force of contrast,—at least, so thought her lover!

At last, the day arrived, fixed for the departure of father and daughter; and Lord Ayrshire and Desbrow, anxious to be with Cecile as long as possible, determined to accompany them to Dover. Gladly would they have gone to France, to save her from being wholly left to the uncongenial society of her parent, but that Lord Ayrshire felt that, in his affliction, the gaieties of the French capital would be as unbearable as inconvenient; and he knew sufficient of Comte de Bethune, to be aware that the period of Cecile's residence there, would be devoted to introducing her to all his connections and acquaintances.

Desbrow, feeling the incompatibility of his character, with that of his future beau père, thought it best to avoid personal intercourse with him, until the period fixed for his marriage had arrived; and much as he regretted tearing himself away from Cecile, he submitted to it, looking forward to the end of June, the time named for his nuptials, with all the impatience of an ardent lover.

## CHAPTER XIV.

"On eut dit un ange aux ailes coupées, tombé, du haut des cieux sur la terre, et passé de la joie aux larmes, sans transitions, sans faute, et sans chute."

The morning that was to see Cecile leave the mansion, which had been from childhood her happy home, broke heavily on her weary eyelids, after a sleepless night, passed in painful retrospection and gloomy anticipation.

How many thoughts of the past, the happy past, rose up before her, in which her dear departed friend, her more than mother, was mingled.

By the little bed, on which she now reclined, had that dear friend sat, hour after hour, supporting her languid head, and pressing her throbbing temples, when two years before a fever had attacked her.

The noiseless step, the gentle voice, the soothing words of affection, which, during the long hours of illness, she had so often gratefully remarked, all now returned to memory, and tears of sorrow streamed from her eyes at the recollection.

About to leave, perhaps for ever, the scene where her happy childhood had been passed, she felt as if again losing Lady Ayrshire, who had been the principal source of all that happiness.

While she remained at Ayrshire Abbey, surrounded by so many objects, that every moment reminded her of that dear friend, she seemed not totally lost to her; but now she should be withdrawn from even this melancholy consolation; and a miniature,

and lock of hair, were all that remained to her, of one, whose unabated affection she never could forget, and whose memory she reverenced.

She left her pillow at an early hour; and, having made all the preparations for her journey, she stole silently from her chamber, and sought the church, half-a-mile distant from the house, where reposed the mortal remains of one who had so well supplied the place of mother to her.

It was one of those gloomy mornings in winter, when lowering clouds and a drizzling rain add dreariness to every object around. The leafless trees, stunted grass, and withered shrubs, all emblems of mortality, were so in harmony with the melancholy of her feelings, that as she entered the church, and sank by the side of the tomb which covered the mouldering frame of the loved dead, her tears and sobs could no longer be suppressed, and she yielded to her emotions, until their intensity subdued their violence, and left only that calm feeling of resignation which religion alone can give, and which is the only balm for sorrow.

The parting between Cecile and the old servants who had loved her from her infancy, was highly touching; and Desbrow, as he witnessed, saw in it an earnest of the happiness, she, who was so beloved by the dependants of another, would bring to his home.

Their journey was made in the travelling coach of Lord Ayrshire, which held the four, and the carriages of Comte de Bethune and Desbrow followed. By this arrangement, they enjoyed the presence of Cecile, though the sense of that enjoyment was often interrupted by the querulous observations of the Comte, who found out, with his accustomed national partiality, that the paved roads of la belle France were infinitely superior to the macadamized one, over which they were gliding with an almost unconscious motion; and that the views were little, mean, and bounded, looking like those in a gentleman's park, instead of glancing over a vast prospect of open country, as in France.

Nay, even the English carriages came in for their share of his censures; they were so much too easy, the double springs prevented that motion, so *agreeable* and *healthy* in French carriages, which rendered a drive in one of them so conducive to the acceleration of the circulation of the blood as horse exercise. But in all English vehicles, one felt as if seated in an easy chair, no exercise, no movement, and consequently no appetite; though, to judge from the specimen he gave of his, at every inn at which the party stopped, one might have arrived at a different conclusion.

The trottoirs in the streets were found to be most inconvenient, as they took up so much space, for the accommodation of pedestrians, generally composed of the canaille, which might have been better employed, in affording place for the equipages of the aristocracy.

The dinners at the inns were pronounced to be detestable; the cooking, execrable: and the want of les petits vins de France, a serious grievance, as the vin de Bordeaux was too strong, and the other wines, trop capiteux.

Cecile seemed to suffer so much from the fastidiousness and prejudices of her father, that Lord Ayrshire and Desbrow endeavored to avert even the appearance of dissent from his opinions; and by this forbearance, the journey passed off without any disagreeable discussion, though three of the travellers felt. that to their forbearance alone was this harmony to be attributed; the fourth was too much occupied with self, to think of aught else.

A detour was made, to avoid passing through London, and our party, on arriving at Dover, learned that a packet was to sail for Calais next morning.

They passed a silent and sorrowful evening at the inn, all, except the comte, painfully occupied with the thoughts of their approaching separation, which weighed heavily on their minds.

Cecile found a few moments to converse alone with Desbrow, and employed them chiefly to intreat that he would devote as much of his time as possible to her dear Lord Ayrshire.

"I shall no longer be near to console him," said the affectionate girl; and he will need the presence of some one who was acquainted with *her* he laments, to whom he can talk of her, and know that his praises and regrets are felt and reciprocated."

Desbrow promised to devote his whole time and attention to him; and this promise was a new link in the chain of affection, which united him to Cecile.

Before parting for the night, Cecile told Desbrow, that she could give him tidings of his friend Arlington, as she had found a letter from her dear Lady Emily Vavasour, at Dover, which had been forwarded from Ayrshire Abbey, announcing her approaching marriage with Lord Arlington,

and deeply regretting that the recent affliction of Lord Ayrshire precluded her from intreating Cecile's presence at her nuptials.

"They must be married ere this," said she, "as the letter is of long date. If you knew dear Emily, as I do," continued Cecile, "how you would rejoice at the happiness of your friend! She is all goodness, and beautiful as good;—I love her as though she were my sister."

Desbrow felt highly gratified at this intelligence, for the sincerity of his attachment made him rejoice that his friend had chosen so wisely; and he rejoiced the more, that their wives, by a happy chance, should be such dear friends, as to ensure their being able to keep up the same cordial intercourse that had ever subsisted between them.

He communicated this sentiment to Cecile, who partook of it, and they dwelt, with pleasure, on the thought of their future intimacy.

At an early hour next morning, after a hurried attempt at breakfast, the party left the Ship Inn, to embark on board the steamboat.

Desbrow gave his arm to Cecile, and again and again repeated the vows of unaltered love, while he led her towards the vessel.

Partings are always painful to those who are attached; but when the sea is about to divide us from those we love, the bitterness is increased, as the distance seems extended, and a vague dread of every risk, to which that fickle element exposes its voyagers, steals over even the manly heart—a dread still more felt by the susceptible and ductile—one of woman.

Lord Ayrshire and Desbrow entered the ship to remain with Cecile to the last moment; and both were supporting her while they endeavored to speak that comfort to her, which they were themselves far from feeling; when, at the same moment, all three recognised Lord Arlington walking towards them, sustaining on his arm a lady enveloped in a shawl and mantle, whose face was concealed by a deep bonnet and black lace veil which covered it.

"There is Lord Arlington, and that must be my dear Emily," exclaimed Cecile; "oh! how fortunate to meet her, and by accident, when I have such need of her consolation!"

So saying, she flew, rather than run, towards the supposed Emily, and had clasped her in her arms, ere she had discovered the lady was, Lady Walmer; with whom she was but slightly acquainted.

She explained her mistake, and was rather surprised at observing that lady shrink back, turning alternately pale and red, and nearly overcome by agitation, requesting Arlington to lead her to the cabin. While this scene was passing between the ladies, Desbrow had approached Arlington, with extended hand and cordial greeting; but, to his amazement, he drew back, evidently distressed and embarrassed, waving his hand to Desbrow, as if to entreat him to retire; while he hurried Lady Walmer into the cabin.

All this scene was inexplicable to Desbrow; and, to Cecile's repeated expressions of wonder as to its meaning he could make no reply. At this moment, a pencil note from Arlington was brought to him, intreating to learn the place of his destination, as he had much to communicate, and wished to do so by letter.

Desbrow had only time to write a line, saying that he was returning directly to London, where a letter would find him, when the packet weighed anchor, and Lord Ayrshire and he, having taken a hurried adieu of Cecile and her father, left the ship.

It was perhaps well for Desbrow, that he had to console Lord Ayrshire, who, in thus parting with her whom he had so long considered as his child, felt the wound inflicted on his peace by the death of his excellent wife, bleed afresh; and Desbrow tried to forget all selfish feelings, in endeavoring to restore himto serenity.

The astonishment which the unaccountable apparition and manner of Arlington had excited, served also to divert his attention from his own regrets, and he and his friend pursued their route to town, there to await the promised communication from Arlington. A thousand vague fears flitted through the mind of Desbrow. Why was Arlington on board the packet, and *alone* with Lady Walmer, when he believed him married, or on the point of marriage, with Lady Emily?

All this seemed incomprehensible, and appeared still more so, when, on arriving in town, he found a letter from Arlington, which had been forwarded to him from the country, dated ten days before, announcing that all was settled for his approaching nuptials, which were to take place in the course of the following week. A passage in this letter struck Desbrow forcibly; it was as follows—

"You were right, my dear friend, when you told me that my passion for Lady Walmer was an illusion which absence could not fail to destroy, as I should one day be ready to admit, when my heart became really sensible of the power of love. That moment has arrived, and I admit that you were right, for the sentiment Emily inspires, differs as wholly from the unhallowed passion I felt for Lady Walmer, as does Emily from that lady.

"I feel ready to attempt all that virtue could dictate, since I have loved Emily, as, alas! I was ready to execute the impulses of guilty passion, when I sighed for Lady Walmer.

"When you know Emily, you will think me one of the most fortunate of mortals; and you will not value her the less because she is the chosen friend of your Cecile, of whom she speaks nearly as warmly as you would do.

"We may well congratulate each other on the happy prospects that await us; but I must not forget, that to your counsel I owe my escape from the inglorious thraldom which enchained me in London, and might, nay, *would*, have precluded the union, which now is ready to crown my wishes."

When Desbrow had perused this letter, he was more than ever astonished at what even before appeared so unaccountable; the more he reflected, the less could he explain the enigma. That something extraordinary had occurred, he felt certain; and that it was of a disagreeable and improper nature, was scarcely less doubtful. "To-morrow," thought he, "must bring me a letter from Arlington, explanatory of all this, and until then, let me try to think as well of my friend as I can under such suspicious appearances."

The pale face and agitated manner of Arlington, were recalled to memory; and Desbrow pitied him, ere he knew what he had to pity.

## CHAPTER XV.

"It is the nature of man, never to feel love so violently, as when circumstances arise to oppose his passion."

We left Arlington returning to his chamber, after his luckless interview with Lady Walmer. He had been but a few minutes absent from it, but what had he not suffered? and what a fearful effect was that brief period likely to exercise over his future destiny?

He threw himself into a chair, and looked around, as if to be sure that he was not in some frightful dream. There was every thing just as he had left them; a cheerful fire blazing, and the pen not yet dry, with which he had written what he intended to be an eternal farewell to her who had caused all his unhappiness; but now, that object, for which he felt almost a dislike, had stepped between him and happiness, and he reflected with dismay that he might be condemmed to the wretched fate of wearing out a dreary existence with her.

He shuddered at the thought, and at that moment, his glance fell on the portrait of Emily, placed before him on the table. Her dove-like eyes, seemed to look at him with that expression of affection and softness, which were their peculiar characteristic. The painter had caught the speaking look of her mouth, and had done justice to the extreme beauty of her countenance, which never struck Arlington with so profound a sense of admiration as at this moment, when he felt he had probably lost her for ever. Scattered about the table, were various little gifts of hers, each, and all, endeared by some fond recollection. They brought a gush of tenderness to his heart, and Arlington, the hitherto gay, and happy Arlington, felt unable to resist the emotions that overpowered him, and for the first time since his childhood, wept with uncontrollable anguish.

All the confidential intercourse, and happy hours passed with Emily, seemed to flit before him; and then, came the thought —the painful, mortifying thought—that henceforth she would banish him from her heart, and never think of him but with disgust and dislike. At one moment, he determined to write to her, and tell her all, but after a little reflection, he asked himself—Could he—dare he, sully her pure mind, with the revelation of his unhallowed entanglement with a married woman?—No; it was impossible. He then thought of writing to Lord Vavasour, and explaining the whole business to him; but, ought he to expose to the condemnation of another, the unfortunate woman who had caused all this misery by her unhappy attachment to him? No! it was more his duty to screen and protect her; and painful—wretched—as the performance of that duty must render him, he would not shrink from it.

He attempted not to gloss over the hor-

rors of his situation; they were all exposed to his view, and bitter were his feelings, as he contemplated their probable results. He expected every hour to receive a communication from Lady Walmer, and in this expectation, remained sunk in the chair into which he had thrown himself on entering the chamber.

More than once he fancied he had caught the sound of footsteps in the corridor, and he started with all the trembling anxiety of the culprit who expects to hear his doom pronounced. But again the sounds died away—all was silent—and he sank back into his previous state of benumbing torpor.

At length, a thought flashed across his mind—the letter he had written to Lady Walmer, and placed in her hand, she would be sure to read it—would see how fondly, how wholly, he was devoted to another; and if she possessed but one spark of generosity, or feminine delicacy, she would not—she could not—accept the sacrifice which his being detected in her chamber had forced him to offer. No! she would fly his presence, rather than suffer him to partake her lot; she would return to her relations, and remain with them, leaving him free to devote his future life to his adored Emily. There was happiness—there was rapture in the thought; and he blessed his stars for having written the letter.

Hour after hour rolled heavily away; and, at length, the sound of persons moving in the house was distinctly audible. In the next minute, he heard a carriage driven to the door. His window commanding a view of the sweep in front of the entrance to the vestibule, he drew aside the curtains, and saw Lord Walmer enter the travelling carriage which had previously conveyed his suite; and then his valet de chambre having mounted the seat behind, it was driven away as rapidly as four post horses could whirl it.

This was death to his hopes, as it proved that all chance of explanation or reconciliation between the husband and wife was at an end. She was left—abandoned—deserted—and *he*—*he* was the cause of all this. His temples throbbed, and his head ached, almost to bursting; the blood seemed to recede from his heart, and to mount to his brain; he felt a sense of suffocation that rendered the fresh air indispensable; and hastily changing his evening costume for one more appropriate, he descended the stairs, and rushed rather than walked, into the pleasure-grounds.

It was one of those lovely bright clear, mornings, as rare as they are precious in our climate in winter; the dew drops gemmed the evergreen trees and shrubs, with which the grounds were thickly planted, and the bright hue of their verdure almost made one forget that it was not spring.

The sun rose in unclouded splendor; the dew drops, reflecting its rays, sent forth a thousand brilliant sparkles; the birds carolled their matin notes of joy, and all nature seemed to put on fresh charms, as if refreshed by night.

The freshness of the morning air, which fanned the forehead of Arlington, restored him to some degree of calmness; but when, on looking around at the beautiful picturesque grounds, the thought that he was viewing them for the last time, presented itself to his mind; and he felt, as did our first parent when about to be driven from Paradise, and cast "his last lingering look behind."

At a sudden turn of a walk, Arlington almost ran against some person, and at a glance, discovered that it was Emily. He stood as if transfixed to the spot, scarcely able in the confusion and agitation of the moment, to reply to her mild yet cordial greeting.

The gentle girl, with looks beaming with affection and confidence, placed her arm within his, as she had been wont to do; and asked him why he, who was in general not an early riser, was abroad at that unusual hour?

"But I suppose," she "continued, "this delicious morning tempted you, as it did me, for I rarely venture out so soon, yet could not resist the impulse to stroll in the pleasure grounds, while yet the dew hangs trembling on the leaves and herbs. But surely you are ill!" said Emily, struck with the change in Arlington's countenance; your arm is tremulous, and your hand," laying her own small, white and dimpled one on his, "is quitete feverish. I see, I know you are suffering," said she, all her tenderness excited by his evident indisposition; "let us return directly to the house, for indeed, dear Arlington, you are unfit to be abroad."

Her tenderness produced a violent revulsion in Arlington; his frame trembled, tears gushed to his eyes, and, no longer master of himself, he grasped the hands of Emily, and fixing his looks on her face, he passionately exclaimed,

"Emily, dear adored Emily! if this should be our last meeting, let me have the consolation, the only one that now awaits me, of carrying with me the persua-

sion that you are convinced, that *you*—and *you only*—have ever been, can ever be—loved by me! Oh, let me implore you, however appearances may be against me, never to let this conviction pass from your mind!"

It instantly recurred to Emily, that he referred to the scene of the song, two nights before, with Lady Walmer, when she had shown that she was distressed by it. Turning therefore to Arlington, she assured him with all the warmth of her gentle nature, that she doubted not, never could doubt his love; and intreated him to be convinced that he had her whole confidence.

Overcome by this display of her affection, and feeling how selfish, how cruel it was in him, under existing circumstances, to search to retain an interest in her heart, when it would so soon become her duty to banish him from it, he turned wildly from her, then pausing a moment, he seized her hand, and after passionately pressing it to his lips, abruptly hurried away; leaving the aimable girl shocked and affected at his visible perturbation, which she wholly attributed to some violent and sudden attack of fever.

Arlington flew, rather than ran, to the house, and reached his chamber without encountering any of the family, Lord and Lady Vavasour not having yet left theirs. On his table, he found the following note, from Lady Walmer, and he tore it open almost with loathing:—

"My doom is sealed:—Lord Walmer has left me, and for ever; and too well do I know the hearts of those who have called themselves my friends, to doubt that they will turn from the disgraced and ruined wife, with even more alacrity than they sought her in her prosperous days. I cannot, dare not, face that world, whose idol I have so long been.

"I wish to quit England for ever. Am I to count on you as my friend and protector? or will you, like the rest of those who have flattered and lured me to destruction, leave me to the ruin you have brought on my head? I shall go to ———, the third post from this, where I shall wait your presence, or your answer."

Every line of this letter excited fresh disgust in the mind of Arlington; the selfishness of the writer was so apparent, that he groaned in spirit when he reflected that the laws of honor compelled him to give his protection to, and to pass his future days with her. How did he execrate the artificial state of society, which forged such laws—laws equally opposed to religion and morality, yet the violation of which, would stamp him as a man, who deserted the woman he had ruined.

Had Lady Walmer read the letter he had addressed to her? was the next thought of Arlington. If she had, and yet could continue to claim his protection, she must be indeed lost to every feeling of delicacy; and if she had not, and still counted on his affection, how dreadful must be her anguish, whenever she chanced to discover this written proof of his indifference to herself, and strong love for another.

## CHAPTER XVI.

"Those who make the opinion of the world the criterion of their conduct, are but too apt to neglect the dictates of religion and conscience."

On entering the house, he discovered from his valet de chambre, that Lady Walmer had left the house during his absence from it; and this was some relief to his feelings; but how was *he* to leave it? and what excuse could he give? He would fain have received letters demanding his immediate presence in London.

No sooner had he formed this plan, than a note from Lord Vavasour, desiring to see him in the library, again threw him into a state of fresh agitation. He felt like a culprit going to receive his sentence of condemnation, as he entered the scene of so many happy hours; and the unusual sternness and severity depicted on the brow of Lord Vavasour, proclaimed that Arlington in him was to find no unprejudiced judge.

A cold bow was the only mark of recognition Arlington met; he, who had been accustomed to be greeted by smiles and cordial shakes of the hand by Lord Vavasour. The difference shocked him, though he was prepared for a painful scene, by his consciousness of the thoroughly unworthy aspect under which his conduct must appear to the eyes of another.

"I have sent for you, Lord Arlington, on a most distressing subject," said Lord Vavasour; "but our relative situations render a frank explanation necessary, and give me the right of demanding it; though when your lordship will have read the letter I now place in your hands, you will,

perhaps, think no explanation necessary, as, unfortunately, that seems to render excuse impossible."

Thus saying, he presented to Arlington a letter, written that morning by Lord Walmer, previous to his departure, detailing the scene of the night before, in the dressing-room of his wife, with his determination of never more seeing her, adding, that he thought it a duty to inform Lord Vavasour of the shameful conduct of the affianced husband of his daughter, who, when within a few days of marriage with her, and beneath the same roof, could so far violate all the laws of delicacy, morals, and religion, as to be found concealed in the apartment of a married woman; a conduct, he asserted which left no room for doubt, or need for comment.

Lord Walmer went on to state, how much he felt grieved, that this scandalous proceeding should have taken place beneath the roof of Lord Vavasour, whose hospitality and confidence had been so shamefully abused.

Arlington perused this letter with varying and conflicting emotions; the truth of the allegations he could not refute; his pride and delicacy were deeply wounded, yet he shrank from even attempting to exculpate himself, at the expense of the woman who had caused all this misery.

His silence, his agitation, and above all the expression of deep wretchedness imprinted on his countenance, excited a feeling of pity in the generous heart of Lord Vavasour, which quelled the angry emotions that had previously reigned there.

He saw the struggle of Arlington, as he endeavored to speak, and, in a kinder tone, he suggested, that perhaps he might prefer writing. Overcome by this change of manner, Arlington, no longer able to suppress his feelings, stated the whole case to Lord Vavasour; he dwelt, with candor, on his former reprehensible passion for Lady Walmer, and on the pains he had taken to excite a return in her breast; he related how, influenced by the counsel of Desbrow, he had fled from London to avoid her, and how his whole heart having become devoted to Lady Emily, she had driven every other image from his mind. Here, overpowered by the intensity of his feelings, the big drops burst from his eyes, while Lord Vavasour, touched by what he had heard, and what he saw, held out his hand to him, and uttered a few words of kindness.

Arlington endeavored to recover some degree of composure, while he stated all that had occurred between Lady Walmer and himself since her arrival. He thought that on such an occasion it would be no breach of confidence, to show her note, which he had forgotten to destroy, and related the contents of that which he had written in answer, with the intention of leaving it at her dressing-room door, when the arrival of Lord Walmer led to the fearful denoument already described.

Lord Vavasour, who had lived too long in the gay world, and partaken too much of its follies and vices, to feel as much shocked as perhaps a father ought to have felt on such an occasion, was more inclined to pity than condemn Arlington.

All his censure was directed to Lady Walmer, on whose conduct he passed a severe and justly merited condemnation, but with a generosity only to be appreciated, by taking into consideration, the more than distaste—the positive antipathy—with which he now regarded that unhappy woman. Arlington intreated his forbearance, and reminded him that it was the professions of attachment, and the constant attentions, which he had lavished towards her some months before, that had engaged her affection—an affection which now would be the bane of his life.

"I have brought this misery on myself," said Arlington, "and if I only were to suffer, I should bear it as a man; but, when I reflect how it involves the happiness of others, I sink before the blow.—Lady Walmer claims my protection; it is the only amends I can make her for having deprived her of fame, home, and consideration. Can I, therefore, whatever the effort costs me, refuse to make it?"

"This is madness, folly," replied Lord Vavasour; "*she*, and she alone, has induced this catastrophe. As yet too, she is unstained, save by levity and indelicacy, both of which appear to me much more visible in her conduct than affection. Your protection, therefore, as you call it, will only plunge you both into actual guilt; and had she a particle of virtue, would she not prefer enjoying the consolation of having sinned only in appearance, to claiming a sacrifice from you, which must set the seal of reprobation on both? Go not to her: let her seek her family, who cannot abandon her at such a crisis: with them, or even alone, she will be more protected than she can be by you; for the protection which a lover offers to a married woman, so far from being one, only points her out as an adultress, and forfeits for ever her last claim to respectability. I

talk not to you of the matter in a religious or moral point of view," continued Lord Vavasour; "because, unfortunately, religion and morals, which ought to be our guides, in such cases, are seldom considered; and worldly wisdom is the standard by which most men are influenced: but, in all points of view, let me intreat you not to add guilt to your imprudence. Avoid this woman, for her sake as well as your own, and all may yet be well."

"But can I refuse the protection she claims? Can I desert her who has lost all for my sake?"

"If she had yielded to your seduction, and abandoned her home for you, I grant that, according to the received usage on such occasions—nay, more, according to humanity, you could not desert the woman you had ruined. But this is a totally different case—you fled from her, to save her and yourself; she followed you, and you still resisted her arts. For now that you have told me your past position with her, I must say, that her conduct since she entered beneath my roof, has been as unfeeling as it has been indelicate. She inveigles you to her dressing-room; you are surprised there, by her husband, and the consequences are, that he casts her from him: but are you to condemn yourself to a life of misery and guilt, because you have been weak enough to temporise with her during the last three days, when, had you shown more firmness, all this esclandre would have been saved."

"True, true," groaned, rather than said Arlington, "and never shall I forgive myself for my folly, my infatuation! Why did I not openly show her, that my whole soul was devoted to another, and thus check, at once, every display or indication of her fatal partiality? Still I owe her reparation; and, however painful is the task of making it, I must submit."

"While you are thinking so much of what is due to the feelings of this unworthy woman, you seem to have totally forgotten those of my daughter," said Lord Vavasour, angrily, "whose affections you have engaged, and whose hand would have been yours, in a few brief days. What will be the feelings of my pure minded and innocent child, when she learns that the man with whom she hoped to pass her life, has fled with an adultress, and is living in sin and shame."

"Oh! name it not, if you would not drive me mad," said Arlington; "I see—I feel—all the wretchedness I have caused; and dare not contemplate it."

"Can you then hesitate," asked Lord Vavasour, "which yon will doom to suffer; the young and spotless girl, who looks on you as her affianced husband, or the practised coquette, who, spider like, has spun her web around you, until, like a helpless fly, you are entangled and destroyed. If you had a particle of affection for this worthless woman, you should have no remonstrances from me, as I should consider you unworthy of them; but, seeing you are only actuated by a misjudged sense of honor, I would save you, ere yet it be too late. Write to Lady Walmer, and refer her to the letter you placed in her hands, for a knowledge of your real sentiments; as those sentiments were expressed before she was compromised with her husband, she cannot doubt their sincerity, or expect that the detection, caused by her own impropriety, ought to produce any change in them. She cannot, after such a letter, demand you to fly with her, and if she could, it would prove her too selfish and unworthy to be entitled even to pity."

Arlington's heart was so wholly devoted to Lady Emily, that he was ready to adopt any line of conduct consistent with honor, that could preserve him the inestimable boon of her hand.

He, therefore, sat down to write to Lady Walmer, and with all the delicacy and generosity he so eminently possessed, after explaining his feelings, offered to divide his fortune with her, nay, to lay the whole of it at her feet; but that the affection he entertained for another, as well as his religious and moral sentiments, must for ever preclude his giving her his personal protection.

He had nearly concluded his letter, when a courier arrived, bringing him the painful intelligence of the sudden and dangerous illness of his father, who was seized by severe indisposition at Boulogne, on his return from a visit to the French capital, whence he was hurrying, to be present at the nuptials of his son.

He hastily closed his letter, adding a line, to state that he was setting off to join Lord Heatherfield; and, having despatched it, took an affectionate, but agitated, leave of Lady Emily, her father, and mother; and was, in half an hour from the courier's reaching him, on his route to Dover.

Lady Emily believed, that the agitation Arlington had betrayed, in their interview in the pleasure grounds, had been caused by his anxiety about his parent, and his regret at their approaching separation; and

her tenderness for him was enhanced by this, as she considered it new proof of his affection for her.

Lord Vavasour hoped, that she might never learn the scene of the night before, and carefully concealed all knowledge of it from his wife.

## CHAPTER XVII.

"En ce qu'on appelle fantaisie, amour, passion, on sait d'où l'on part, mais on ignore toujours où l'on arrivera."

Soon after Lady Walmer had written, as already stated, to Arlington, in looking for something in her writing-case, the letter he had put into her hand the night before, and which, from the agitation she had ever since endured, had escaped her recollection, now met her view. She had thrown it into the writing-case, when Lord Walmer knocked at the door, and now, having recognised the writing, she opened it. Rage, jealousy, wounded vanity, all rose up at the perusal of each line. Had she then compromised herself for ever, for a man who thought only of another, and who avowed, even to her, the deep love that other had inspired? Dreadful was the hurricane of passion that now devastated the ill-governed mind of this unhappy woman; tears, burning tears of anger and mortification, chased each other in torrents down her cheeks, as she mentally vowed that her innocent rival should not triumph over her, and that, if she could not command the affection of Arlington, she would, at least, never relinquish the right which she considered the detection of her misconduct, gave her to his protection; and with the base selfishness, that belongs but to the weak and the wicked, she determined to exact what she now knew must be the most painful sacrifice from him, namely, his accompanying her to some foreign land, where she hoped her shame might remain unwitnessed, at least, by those who had hitherto composed her world, and whose altered looks she dared not encounter.

The opinion of that world had been the ordeal by which Lady Walmer had always guided her own conduct, and judged that of others; the impropriety, or sinfulness of an action had never been taken into consideration, and her conscience had so long slumbered, that its powers had become inert, and its whispers silenced.

What will the world think of it? was the only question that ever suggested itself to her mind; and hers was not a heart to be consoled by conscious innocence. If the clique she denominated the world, chose to turn their backs on her—a measure she knew them too well to doubt could not fail to occur, the moment her husband cast her from him—her reputation as a woman of honor, and fashion—terms not always synonymous—was irretrievably lost; for she felt that Lord Walmer would not hesitate to denounce her. All therefore, she could hope was, that in case of a divorce, a sense of honor might induce Lord Arlington to give her his name, and that in a foreign land she might take that place in society, which in England she could no longer expect to fill. All feeling of partiality for Arlington was now obliterated from her heart, because the vanity that governed that heart, had been wounded by his preference for another; but, in proportion to her indifference for him, became her fixed determination to attach him to her for life, by throwing herself on his generosity, and high—though perhaps, false—sense of honor; and thus, attain the end which love could never have accomplished. She conned over the scene which she meant to enact when he arrived; for of his arrival, she allowed herself not to doubt, as she read over and over again, the few lines he had placed on her table, before leaving her dressing-room, in which he offered to share the misfortune he had been the unwilling cause of drawing on her.

"I will never confess to him," said this heartless, and coarse-minded woman, "that I have read the letter he brought to my door; I will pretend that in the agitation of the moment, I threw it into the fire; and when he comes, I will affect to take for granted that he still feels for me the same tenderness he professed a few months ago."

It is shocking to reflect to how many meannesses—nay, crimes—vanity may urge its votaries: to have it made apparent to the world, that Lord Arlington's affection for her had triumphed over his engagement to the young and beautiful Lady Emily, Lady Walmer stooped to deception and artifice, and quelled the angry feelings of her heart to enact the part of a loving and ruined woman, who had sacrificed all to affection.

Calculating the time that Lord Arlington would arrive, she made a studied toilette for his reception. Her beautiful hair was suffered to fall in confusion over the fair cheeks no longer tinged by rouge; her lus-

trous eyes were taught to assume a woe-fraught expression, and her graceful person lost none of its delicate proportions, in the elegant dishabille in which it was attired.

Hour after hour passed, and still Arlington arrived not; at length came the letter already known to our readers, the perusal of which threw Lady Walmer into paroxysms of rage and despair. When the first ebullitions of her anger were over, she gave instant orders for post horses, and set out for Dover, pursuing her route night and day, in the hope of overtaking Lord Arlington. Half dead with fatigue, she arrived there, at seven o'clock in the morning, and learned that the steam-packet was to sail at ten. Ascertaining that Arlington was not at the inn where she stopped, she sent to the other, and discovered that he had arrived a few hours before, and was to embark in the vessel to sail that day. Her plans were instantly formed. She ordered a passage to be secured for herself and servants; and sent her carriage and luggage on board immediately. Then, having in some degree refreshed herself by a bath and an hour's repose, she left the inn at the appointed time, enveloped in a mantle and large shawl, her face concealed by a deep bonnet and veil, and leaning on the arm of her femme de chambre, proceeded to the pier. In a few minutes she saw Arlington arrive, and she contrived to enter the vessel the moment after he did.

Finding a lady close to him, without any male assistant to hand her over the luggage that impeded her steps, he offered her his hand, and had only touched hers when she fell into his arms fainting, or rather affecting to faint.

He supported her, and assisted to lift her veil to give her air, when to his horror and dismay, he recognised in the insensible form in his arms, the woman he least expected—least desired—to behold on earth. He felt as if his destiny was sealed; he turned with loathing from her, and humanity alone prevented his leaving her to the care of her maid, and the few persons around who were assisting her. She soon opened her eyes, and fixing them on him, exclaimed, "The surprise—the joy was too much for me; don't leave me for a moment, dear Arlington, or I shall expire."

He was supporting her to the cabin, when he met Desbrow and his party; the embrace of Cecile, and the being mistaken for Lady Emily, was too much for the exhausted frame of Lady Walmer, and she now really suffered, what she had before merely affected, a faintness that nearly overcame her.

To paint the feelings of Arlington would be impossible; he saw that his presence with Lady Walmer, under existing circumstances, must stamp conviction on the minds of Desbrow and his party, that she was under his protection, and must confirm every evil report respecting them. He knew that Mademoiselle de Bethune was the confidential friend of Lady Emily, and he felt the blush of shame mount to his cheek when he thought of her, and Lord Vavasour, hearing that he was thus publicly appearing with the woman to whom, only a few hours before, he had written to bid an eternal farewell. Who would—who could believe that the rencontre on board the packet was totally unexpected on his part?

All these thoughts passed through his mind, filling it by turns, with anger, indignation, and sorrow, as he sat in his carriage on deck, having refused to attend to the thrice repeated summons of Lady Walmer to descend to the cabin.

Cecile remained on deck with her father, her tearful eyes often cast back to the white cliffs of England, where lay all her hopes, and her reflections little interrupted by the observations of the comte, who lamented that they had not sailed in one of the French packets, as their superiority over the English, in all respects, was, as he said, incontestible. Luckily, his observations were expressed in his native language, otherwise he would have found many of those around disposed to contradict, though incapable of convincing, him; he having made up his mind that every *thing French* must be infinitely superior to every thing English, and as unalterably determined never to conceal this liberal opinion. He repeatedly assured Cecile, that the nautical terms he heard passing around among the sailors, were barbarous, and grated on his ear; whereas in French, they were sonorous and harmonious.

Cecile could not resist observing, that this must arise from his ignorance of the language, for, as England had ever been mistress of the sea, the maritime terms must be analogous to the element to which they related.

She touched on a tender subject, for the comte instantly and angrily told her, that he denied, and should always deny, that her favorite nation were masters of the

sea, as the French were always as ready to dispute the English rule over that wide domain, as they had ever been to meet them on the land, where the prowess of his countrymen had gained them such unequalled and undeniable renown.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

"Perdre le bonheur par sa faute, est la peine la plus amère pour les personnes qui ont de l'imagination. Un évènement que le sort leur envoie, si affreux qu'il soit; un malheur desespéré, a par son excès même quelque chose qui les calme; mais un bien perdu par leur faute, leur apparait sans cesse paré des plus brillantes images; elles le resuscitent à chaque instant, pour le perdre encore avec plus d'amertume, et recomposent leurs doux rêves pour les voir s'avanouir encore."

No sooner had the packet entered the port of Calais, than Lady Walmer appeared on deck, and placed herself so close to the carriage of Arlington, that he conld not quit it without coming in contact with her.

The moment he left it, she addressed him, and having stated that she wished to have half an hour's conversation with him, requested that he would give her his arm to the inn.

To refuse was impossible, though he heartly wished himself a thousand miles away from her, and having disembarked, they proceeded to the hotel.

They were passed on their route to it, by Cecile and her father, which increased the moodiness and distaste already felt by Arlington, at being thus forced, as it were, to appear the protector of a woman, for whom he felt no sentiment allied to affection; and the certainty that it would confirm every evil report relative to them, and convey the most injurious impressions to the mind of Emily's friend, Mademoiselle de Bethune, increased his discontent.

Lady Walmer perceived all that was passing in his mind; but vanity and selfishness silenced female delicacy and pride, and induced her to affect not to have observed his coldness.

Arrived at the hotel, she addressed Arlington as follows, who listened to her with dread, if not with disgust.

"You appeared surprised when you saw me on board of the packet, but, if you reflect for a moment on the terrible, the humiliating, position in which you have placed me, you must admit, that having lost all claim to the protection of my husband or relations, I must now seek it from you, and on you alone, I must also rely for comfort and consolation. Do not interrupt me, as I see you wish to do, by telling me that it was *I*, and not *you*, that led to this catastrophe, by inviting you to the interview which terminated so fatally. This defence however is but a mere sophistry; for, you must admit, I should never have sought that interview had you not, by a series of attentions and protestations, excited in my breast a passion to to which it had before been a stranger. It is true, you fled from me, but you told me it was the *excess* of your attachment that led you to make this sacrifice to my peace. Your prudence came too late, for my affections were irrecoverably yours, but they were not yielded unsought; and all the fearful results that have followed are to be attributed solely to your inconstancy, and my too great devotion. Judging of your heart by my own, I thought that yours could not fail to return to its allegiance, the moment we met, and that you should be assured of my undiminished attachment; indeed, your conduct, up to the last fatal evening at Lord Vavasour's, confirmed me in this illusion. Through my infatuated affection for you, I have forfeited my place in society, my home, my friends, and all that I most valued; and now, you would barbarously desert the woman you have ruined, and deprived of all natural and legitimate protection."

A violent burst of tears interrupted the speaker; and Arlington, actuated by pity and remorse, endeavoured to mitigate her affliction.

Her reproaches—her anger—he might have borne; but her tears, and unprotected situation, appealed too strongly to his generous nature to be resisted.

To the few words of attempted consolation, which he tried to utter, she replied, by saying, "it now only remains for you, to tell me that you love, and that you are engaged to wed another; but, remember, that no vows which you have sworn to her, can be stronger than those which you plighted to me a few short months ago, and which I, trusting in your honor, foolishly, fatally, believed. Has this new object of your love, sacrificed for you, station, reputation, home, and friends? Is she cast on the world, a dishonored, desolate woman? No! Surrounded by friends, and supported by an approving conscience, she will soon forget you, while I,"—and here, another passionate burst of tears interrupted Lady Walmer, and achieved the conquest of the pity, though not the love, of Arlington; for this last, even at that

moment, he felt was for ever fixed on Emily.

The tears—the agitation of Lady Walmer—the picture she had drawn of her own situation—overcame all his better resolutions, and he pledged himself to protect her: but he shuddered while he made the vow, for a presentiment told him that he was sealing his own misery and ruin.

A woman, who possessed one spark of generosity, would never have accepted this forced sacrifice; and a woman, who had the least particle of delicacy, would never have exacted it; but unhappily for him, he had found a woman, whose worldliness of mind had conquered not only virtue, but generosity and all feminine feeling, and who only thought of repairing, as well as she could, the mischief she had entailed on herself.

She anticipated the almost certainty of Lord Walmer's seeking a divorce, and felt that her only chance of obtaining anything like a position in society, must be, by becoming the wife of Arlington.

To accomplish this point, there was nothing she would not do; and though she saw but too plainly, that all her power over his heart was at an end, she was content to owe to pity, that which she could no longer hope from love: and now, that his word was pledged to protect her, she felt certain of the rest.

Arlington told her, that he was going to his father, at Boulogne; "and you would not surely," said he, (in a tone that would have spoken reproaches to any other heart than hers,) "follow me to his sick bed?"

"No! certainly;" said Lady Walmer, "I will remain here, until I hear from you, as I count on *your honor* for joining me, or letting me go to you, the moment your father is well enough to dispense with your attendance,"

Arlington set out immediately for Boulogne, and no one that saw his parting with Lady Walmer, would have believed that he had just pledged himself to her for life, much less that a few months before, he was, or thought he was, desperately in love with her. But love cannot exist without esteem; the passion that assumes its semblance, and imposes on its votaries, no more resembles the true feeling, than vice resembles virtue.

He pursued his route to Boulogne, with feelings of indescribable anguish; he tried not to think of Emily, now that he had for ever lost her, but she rose up continually to memory, in all her purity and beauty, and he almost cursed himself for having consented to the sacrifice Lady Walmer had demanded.

His anxiety about his father could alone divert his thoughts from the fair object that had so uninterruptedly occupied them for the last three months; and, as he drew near Boulogne, a thousand apprehensions filled his mind.

He felt many a pang at the idea of what his father would think, when he came to know that the marriage, which he had anticipated with such delight, was now broken off for ever, and by a liaison with a married woman; a circumstance in itself alone, calculated to grieve and shock any parent, but especially a man of such high moral and religious sentiments, as the Marquis of Heatherfield.

All this affectionate relative's tenderness, kindness and indulgence recurred to his mind at that moment—and *how* was he about to repay him?

Better was the pang which his heart sustained, when he reflected that Emily and his father, the two persons he had most loved, and who had most loved him, would both be rendered wretched by his conduct; which had solely been the result of his own folly, and of the neglect of the principles instilled into him by his parent, in seeking to illume a guilty passion in the breast of a married woman.

Who has ever strayed from the paths of virtue, without feeling a remorse, that if it atones not for, at least, avenges the sin? We should be lenient in our strictures on such sinners, because their own consciences must have whispered more bitter reproaches than we could utter, or else they are too insensible for ours to reach them.

Arlington found, on arriving at the inn, that his father had fallen into a slumber half an hour before, and still slept; but the two physicians told him to prepare himself for the worst, as a few hours must terminate the existence of the marquis.

"Is there no remedy that might prolong his life for even a few weeks?" asked the affectionate son, his heart lacerated at the thought of so soon losing his father. But the doctors explained to him that all remedies were vain; and he seated himself by the side of the bed, to watch, with all the intensity of affection, the troubled slumber of the dying man.

There lay, pale and attenuated, that noble countenance, which had never looked at him in anger; the high and intellectual forehead, nearly as colorless as the few

silver locks that shaded it, and the mouth, where smiles had so often greeted him, now drawn into an expression of bodily pain. The pale lips moved, and inarticulate sounds escaped them, in which the words "My son," were uttered, and in a few minutes after, he awoke, and Arlington concealed himself behind the curtain, that his father might be prepared for his arrival.

The meeting was most touching, and his son felt nearly overpowered, when the dying man, pressing his hand within his, told him that he felt he had but a few hours to live.

"But they are peaceful hours, my dear child," said he, "for I have, I trust in the Almighty, prepared for them as well as our too frail natures will allow a sinful man to do. I die happy in the thought that you will soon be united to an amiable and virtuous woman, who possesses your affections; and that you will be saved from the snares and temptations to which you have hitherto been exposed. I have trembled for you, my dear Arlington, when I have heard of your paying attention to married women; but, thank God, that is now all over, and I have cause to be proud of, and satisfied with, my son. I should have liked to have seen you married, but the will of God be done! the desired event will be only postponed for a few months, and I shall die in the conviction that you will be happy."

What were Arlington's feelings, at hearing this most unmerited congratulation? Every word of affection and confidence spoke reproaches to his soul; and when he reflected that death alone could save his father from the bitter knowledge of his altered position, he shuddered at the alternative of either desiring that event, or, if his life should be prolonged, of forfeiting for ever his esteem and affection. Every crime begets others, neither foreseen or to be avoided; and they who violate *one* duty, find themselves placed in opposition to many others.

When his father again fell into a slumber, Arlington left his chamber, and having entered a saloon, with the intention of writing to Desbrow, an English newspaper caught his eye, and, almost unconsciously, he ran over its columns.

An article headed "Extraordinary Esclandre in High Life!" attracted his attention, and he had only read a few lines, when he found an exaggerated account of his own liaison, and its consequences, detailed, with the additional information, that the injured husband was seeking legal redress, and that the Lady W—the initials only of the names of the parties having been given—had fled to the Continent with Lord A. "What makes the affair still more remarkable (the journal proceeded to state) is, that the gallant gay Lothario was on the point of marriage with the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Lord V. beneath whose roof, the detection of his guilty attachment to Lady W. took place,"

Arlington felt the blush of shame mount to his very temples, at this public exposure of his name, and supposed crime; the notoriety thus given to it, binding him still more to the unfortunate sharer in it, to whom he every hour felt a stronger repugnance—a repugnance which, unknowing her real character, he blamed himself for feeling, now that she was thrown so wholly on his protection. Lord Vavasour —Emily!—what would they think? There was madness in the reflection; and his brain burned, and his pulse beat with agony as he thought of them. If his father had seen this paragraph! "But, God be thanked!" ejaculated Arlington, "he has been spared this blow, and will die in happy ignorance of my folly, my worse than folly."

He put the newspaper into the fire, that none of the attendants of his father should see it, and wrote a long letter to Desbrow, in which he detailed to him the whole state of his position, with his determination to expiate the injury he had unwillingly committed towards Lady Walmer by making the sacrifice she had demanded, of devoting himself to her for the rest of his life—"a life," wrote Arlington, "which must be henceforth wretched, for my whole heart and soul are Emily's and the sentiment I feel towards the unfortunate woman I have ruined, approaches much nearer to dislike than affection. The purity, the strong moral principles of Emily, have created an attachment in my breast, that never can be effaced; and yet, such is my fate, that, while worshipping her good qualities, I am forced to pursue a line of conduct so totally opposed to them, that I must not only forfeit her affection, but lose for ever her esteem. The lover who flies with the adored object whom he has plunged in guilt, must have many a bitter moment, which not all the blandishments of passion can sooth; judge, then, of the misery of him, who flies *from* the woman he adores and respects, to live with one—but, no! I will not finish the cruel sen-

tence; too well will your mind supply the harsh words, that pity for Lady Walmer precludes me from writing."

He had only despatched his letter to Desbrow, when a courier arrived with a packet from Lady Walmer, containing a letter filled with lamentations on his absence, and sending him a newspaper, in which was the statement that he had read.

"You see," wrote Lady W. "our position is now publicly known; and consequently, your protection is become more than ever necessary to me. If your father is not very ill, could you not come here, though but for a day or two; or let me join you in Boulogne, where I could remain incognita?"

Disgust was the predominant feeling in Arlington's mind, as he perused her unfeminine and indelicate letter; the gross selfishness of it, the want of pride and dignity, with which she forced her claims on his protection, formed such an odious contrast to the lovely and pure-minded Emily, the modest and delicate proofs of whose preference for him, had so often recurred to his recollection, that he threw the letter and newspaper together into the flames; and it was not without a violent effort that he so far conquered his disgust, as to write a few lines to Lady Walmer, saying, that he could not leave his father for an hour, and exhorted her not to come to Boulogne.

Two or three days passed; each, finding the Marquis of Heatherfield still more exhausted, and making it more evident that he was rapidly approaching that "bourne whence no traveller returns." Arlington never left him; and lavished those attentions that affection only can bestow, to smooth the bed of death.

Lady Walmer continued to write to him almost daily, expressing her impatience at their continued separation; and complaining that she was become an object of curiosity to all the persons arriving from England, which rendered his presence still more desirable.

Every expression of impatience struck Arlington as an indication of her desire for the death of the father, whose life he would willingly have sacrificed his own to prolong; and this added to his repugnance to her. He destroyed her letters the moment he had read them; and he felt as if it were a profanation of the dying bed, to receive, while in attendance on it, the demonstrations of a guilty passion.

Lord Heatherfield spoke continually of Emily, called her his dear daughter, gave the most affectionate messages for her to his son, and delivered to him the valuable gifts he had purchased at Paris, as wedding presents for her, little imagining that he was directing daggers to the heart of Arlington. In his dying blessing, he joined their names, and having thanked his dear son for having made his last moments happy, resigned his soul to his Creator, with the humble confidence of a true Christian.

Though Arlington had been for some days prepared to lose him, he could not witness his dissolution, without bitter and profound regret; and, as he contemplated the venerable head which had so nobly merited the coronet of his ancestors, and never even imagined an action unworthy of it, or them, he shrank back from the reflection of how differently *he* should support its honors, when, in defiance of every moral and religious precept, he should be the companion of an adultress, an exile from his country; or, if he remained in England, bearing the brand of reprobation on his brow, and setting the worst example to those whom his high station, and great wealth, made dependent on him.

The bed of death is always a scene to awaken salutary reflections, even in the most hardened. Who can behold, without deep emotion, the pale and inanimate features where life lately shone, and thought manifested itself, now cold and rigid as marble, alike insensible to our regret or indifference? There are the eyes that loved to gaze on us, but which shall look on us no more, now sealed by death; the lips that were wont to smile at our approach, or to greet us with words of affection, now closed for ever; and the hand that often grasped our own with friendship's warmth, now cold and helpless, having "forgot its cunning." Where is the spirit that animated the senseless clay before us?—that clay which resembles so much yet alas! is so fearfully unlike, what we loved. Questions of deep import rise from the soul to the lips, when gazing on the corse of one dear to us—questions, that death only can solve; and dreadful would be our feeling, under such trials, did not religion hold forth the blessed hope of "another, and a better world," where we shall meet those who have preceded us to the grave, and whose departure has caused us so many tears.

Can all the boasted power of reason and philosophy offer a balm like religion under such afflictions? Ask the mourner and he will tell you, that the hope of a

reunion hereafter, alone consoles him; for reason, without this blessed hope, could only enable him to see the extent of his loss, and philosophy could but teach him to support it with patience. It is religion the blessed compact between God and man which points to another and a better world, and is the only anchor on which hope can rest when sorrow assails it. They who have not mourned over the bed of death, where lay the remains of the object dearest to them on earth, cannot feel with what yearning, the heart of the wretched survivor turns from this life to the life to come. As it is only in sickness that we feel the value of medicine, so is it only in sorrow, when all earthly hope fails, that the soul turns to religion for support and consolation.

## CHAPTER XIX.

"Pride and poverty are the two worst companions that can meet. They live in a state of continual warfare, and the sacrifice they make to each other, like those made by enemies, to establish a hollow truce, only serve to increase their discord."

We left Desbrow in London anxiously expecting the explanation of his friend, but his suspense was of short duration; for ere three days had elapsed, the newspapers announced the confirmation of his worst fears, and explained the presence of Lady Walmer and Arlington on board the packet, by stating that they had eloped to the continent together.

The letter of Arlington, which reached Desbrow in due time, convinced him that his friend was more unfortunate than guilty, in this unhappy entanglement, and excited his warmest sympathy and pity. He was too well aware of the predominant failing in Arlington's character, which was a yielding weakness of nature, and infirmity of purpose, that made him the slave to the passions of others, rather than to his own, not to feel the inutility of urging him to separate from Lady Walmer and now that a false principle of honor led him to sacrifice himself to this unworthy woman, Desbrow knew it would be unavailing to counsel him.

Like all weak people, Arlington could be obstinate when he imagined he was performing a duty; though had he possessed a less share of weakness, he must have quickly perceived that his conduct in the present instance, was far from deserving this denomination, for, in reality, it was equally opposed to reason and to virtue. But they who live much in the great world are but too apt to adopt its artificial codes, which are so often the very antipodes of those of morality and religion, that the practice of both is utterly incompatible.

Desbrow could therefore only lament the fate of his friend, without the power of extricating him, as he knew that the fear of the world's dread laugh, or sneer, had more influence over the mind of that friend, than all the precepts which morality and religion could utter. He wrote a kind letter to Arlington, and having engaged Lord Ayrshire to accompany him to Desbrow Hall, they left London together, cheered by letters from Cecile, stating her safe arrival in the Faubourg St. Germaine.

We shall leave Lord Ayrshire and Desbrow leading a rational life in the country, planning improvements in the house and park of the latter, and Desbrow munificently dispensing a portion of his vast wealth in ameliorating the condition of the poor in his neighbourhood. Schools were founded, charitable institutions were endowed, and employment given to all who were willing to work.

Arranging the suite of apartments, intended for Cecile, became the favorite task of Desbrow: all that a refined taste, joined to a devoted attachment could invent, was lavished here; and Lord Ayrshire, in consequence of his more intimate knowledge of the habits of Mademoiselle de Bethune, was continually consulted by her anxious lover, with respect to the various alterations. The preparations made to receive a bride in the mansion that is to be her home, by the enamoured lover, are always rich, if not tasteful, in proportion to the degree of affection of him who plans them; Desbrow's was manifested by the execution of all that elegance and comfort could suggest: and, as the work advanced, he enjoyed many anticipations of happiness, at the idea of the gratification Cecile would experience, when she came to take possession of the Hall as its mistress.

While the future was thus being arranged for her, the *present* offered any but a cheering appearance, and it required all the gay visions of hope, which pointed to England and Desbrow, to enable her to support with patience her abode in Paris.

The Hotel de Bethune, in the Rue de Varennes, Faubourg St. Germaine, is one of the most vast in Paris; situated *entre cour et jardin*, it presents a splendid façade and the extent of its numerous suites of apartments, with the painted ceilings, and

gilt cornices and architraves, remind the beholder of the former grandeur of the proprietors of this palace. But, alas! time, and revolutionary violence, had touched the pile externally, and internally, with ungentle hands; and if enough ornament remains to remind the gazer of past wealth and grandeur, the dilapidations, which on every side meet the eye bear witness of present poverty.

Cecile sighed as she contrasted this gloomy residence of fallen greatness, with the orderly and comfortable mansions of her dear adopted country; and when her father called on her to admire the vast extent of the rooms, and the carving and gilding which decorated them, remarking how superior they were to the small houses, and mesquin ornaments of the petits salons in England, she listened in silence to his praises of France, and all that was French, heartily wishing herself back in the country, to which he was so little inclined to do justice.

The pride and the finances of the Comte de Bethune, were little in accord with each other; while the first flourished with a luxuriance worthy of the feudal times, the second hardly enabled him to occupy one wing of the hotel of his ancestors, and he preferred having the rest of the vast mansion empty, and falling daily to decay, to letting a portion of it to any of the many respectable persons, who proposed to become his tenants.

As the old Swiss porter threw back the porte cocher, to give them entrance, and removed his bonnet de coton, with an air in which curiosity mingled with respect, Cecile could almost fancy she was entering some ruined chateau a la Radcliffe, and as the wheels rattled over the pavement, overgrown with grass and herbs, she felt almost like a prisoner, about to enter his dungeon. Having ascended the peristyle, over the massive door of which, the arms of De Bethune shone in all the splendor of blazonry, being the only mark of reparation visible to the eye, they passed through the salle d'entrée, the tessellated marble pavement of which, returned the sound of their footsteps in hollow reverberations. The domestics came forward to welcome them more cordially, but much less respectfully, than English servants receive their employers, and Cecile was surprised at the familiarity with which they treated her haughty father.

The establishment consisted of a superannuated maître d'hôtel; a femme de charge, the tremulous movements of whose head and hands, bore evidence of the years she had numbered; a slipper-shod damsel, with a silk kerchief, tastefully twisted round her head, who was the aid and eléve of the femme de charge; and a young man, with top-boots, and a tarnished livery, who acted in the double capacity of footman and groom. The cook brought up the rear; he was a cotemporary of the maître d'hôtel and femme de charge, and all three seemed nearly coeval with the hotel; his bonnet de coton, and apron, were of a less pure white than could be desired; his coteau was conspicuous at his ceinture, and his fingers and nostrils betrayed their frequent contact with snuff, in so evident a manner, as to be no less disgusting to the palates of those who might be condemned to partake of his plats, than injurious to his own.

Madame le Moine examined Cecile through her spectacles, and pronounced her the image of her grandmother, except that her nose was not retroussé, her mouth beaucoup, plus petite, and her eyes plus grands, and that she had not les cheveux dorés of Madame la Comtesse!

The comte listened with complacency, while Cecile at that moment, contemplated the portrait of her grandmother, as pointed out by Le Moine, and observing the red hair, upturned nose, large mouth, and squinting eyes, which rendered it an extraordinary specimen of ugliness, was tempted to laugh at the compliment.

The ante-room was graced with a large stove, which served the double capacity of table and cupboard; on it were placed sundry brushes, a cork-screw, some cigars, and a large lump of bees-wax, which the frotteur had left there, and which the heat had sent in streams over the brushes, &c. An old lame parrot, who screamed most loudly from his cage, and a few straight-backed chairs, completed the ensemble of this chamber of all works, which led to the grand suite of apartments. The salons, with their vast and dingy mirrors, which might be said to give only sombre reflections; the faded velvet, and damask hangings of the walls the discolored girandoles and lustres, the carved gilt sofas and fauteuils, and the cumbrous screens, formed a dreary picture, in which the sylph-like form of the beautiful Cecile, seemed to pass like a sunbeam through the grate of a prison, rendering the gloom of all around still more visible.

"Ah, Dieu Mercie! I am once more chez moi," exclaimed the Comte de Bethune, as throwing himself into a large bergere, he looked complacently around

him; a cloud of dust arose from the long unbrushed cushions of the bergere that nearly enveloped him, but which interrupted not his self-congratulations. "I can now breathe freely in these spacious and lofty salons, and am not half suffocated by the smell of that abominable coal, which the English seem to like so much."

While commenting on the coals, a large damp trunk of a tree was smouldering on the bronze dogs, in the open chimney, sending forth more smoke than heat, and emitting an odor that Cecile would gladly have exchanged for the worst coal that England could produce, while the smoke brought tears to her eyes.

"One really never knows the value of this country," continued the comte, "until one has been out of it, and France never appeared so delightful to me, as now that I compare its agréments with those of England."

A suppressed sigh from Cecile, was the only answer; and after reposing himself for a few minutes in the bergere, in which he had intrenched himself, and from which he rose covered with the accumulated dust of months, the comte conducted his daughter to her chambre á couchèr.

The faded splendor of this apartment was in perfect keeping with the salons; pale blue velvet lined the panels, bearing scarcely a vestige of their original celestial hue, and the mouldings which incased them, representing groups of Cupids sporting among flowers, were nearly black, instead of wearing their once bright golden lustre. The lofty mirrors, from which much of the quicksilver had retreated, showed a thousand fantastic figures; and the high canopied bed, crowned with its coronet and plumes, now nearly black, from the accumulation of damp and dust bore striking proofs of the power of time and neglect.

This chamber, which, like all the others occupied by the comte, opened on a marble terrace, that descended to what had once been a garden, but which now presented a vast wilderness of decayed trees, stunted shrubs, and flowers running wild, with scattered patches of vegetables, cultivated by the porter, to amuse his leisure hours, and improve his pot au feu.

The look of desolation and discomfort, which her chamber presented, struck a chill to the feelings of Cecile; and when Madame le Moine told her, that *she* was to have the honor of assisting at her toilette, Cecile thought, with a sigh of regret, of the neat bed-rooms, and comfortable dressing-rooms she had hitherto been accustomed to, as well as of the intelligent and active femme de chambre, who had waited on her from infancy at Lord Ayrshire's.

Her father told her, that she must appear in an elegant demi toilette, as he should take her to pay one or two visits in the evening: and having left her to prepare for dinner, she despatched the momentous affair of dressing, as quickly as she could, giving as little trouble to her aged assistant as possible, whose hands being left nearly unemployed, her tongue was more at liberty to enjoy that bavardage in which French servants are so fond of indulging.

She congratulated mademoiselle on the happiness of being at length restored to her native country; pitied her for the many years she had been condemned to live out of it; and rejoiced that *she* had never been doomed to quit her *chere patrie, la belle France*, which not even the terrible Revolution could make her abandon.

The respectful deference of English servants towards their employers, had not prepared Cecile for the familiarity of Madame le Moine, which she received with a cold civility, that sent that old dame to complain to the maître d'hôtel, and cuisinier that mademoiselle was *une veritable Anglaise*, proud, cold, and formal.

The Comte de Bethune lamented, when his daughter made her appearance, that there had not been time to get her a chapeau from Herbault, and a robe from Victorine, as she was scarcely presentable he observed, in her toilette a l'Anglaise; but he promised to ask Madame la Duchesse de Montcalm, to order what was necessary for her, as it was of the utmost importance that she should be *bien mise* to win the suffrages of her Parisian connexions. The importance he attached to her dress, impressed Cecile with the truth of all she had ever heard, of the légèreté and frivolity of most of the individuals of the nation, to which her father belonged; and a smile almost betrayed her thoughts, of which, if he observed it, luckily, a summons to dinner prevented his demanding the cause.

Her father led her to the salle-à-manger with a gravity and ceremony, which, however it might mark his respect for her, was little calculated to excite either her cordiality or cheerfulness.

This apartment, like the rest of the suite, was vast and lofty; the walls were stuccoed to imitate jaune antique marble, and a fountain at each side of the buffet, with large lions' heads, which had now

forgotten to pour forth their accustomed tribute of water, but which still continued with distended jaws, to grin at the spectators, added to the cold aspect of this nearly deserted banquet-hall.

A small table of two covers occupied the centre; and the maître d'hôtel, and valet de pied, were ranged in due order.

Unlike the generality of heroines, who are supposed or stated to be, superior to the infirmities of humanity. Cecile really felt hungry; and, though certain reminiscences of the cook's propensity to snuff, did cross her mind, her appetite compelled her to eat. The soup de vermicelle clair, was guiltless of any taste, save of the tepid water of which it was composed; the vol au vent, à la financière, was filled wholly with cretes de coq; and the friture de poulet, peeping out from a wilderness of fried parsley, looked so flaccid instead of being crisp, that she could not venture to taste it. The fricandeau á l'oseil, was equally untempting; and Cecile saw the first course, to which her father did ample justice, disappear, leaving her appetite unsatisfied.

The second service presented three roasted thrushes, enveloped in covers of bacon and surrounded by a forest of watercresses; cardans à la moëlle de bœuf half cold, and des œufs à la niege, resembling soap suds much more than snow, with omelet sucré, and petits pains à la duchesse.

To eat a thrush, Cecile felt would be impossible, as they, of all the tuneful, feathered choir, were her especial favorites, from the tameness with which they hopped near the window of her dear home, at Lord Ayrshire's. Gladly would our poor heroine have hailed the appearance of a plain cutlet of mutton, a wing of a chicken boiled or roast, or in short, of any simple viand to allay the pangs of hunger which really assailed her; but the plats before her bore such evident marks of having occupied the fingers of the old artiste de cuisine, that she turned with loathing from them; and while eating a morsel of bread, was forced to listen to the praises, which her father lavished on each dish, and his self congratulations at having escaped from la cuisine Anglaise. Bechamel his cook, he pronounced to be *un veritable artiste de l'ancien regime*, of which so few (and judging from this specimen, Cecile thought luckily,) remains; for the comte declared, that the influx of the English, Russians and Germans, had destroyed the modern cuisine in France, by introducing their barbarous national dishes, and strong sauces.



## CHAPTER XX.

"Yes, there are real mourners—I have seen
A fair, sad girl, mild suffering and serene;
Attention through the day her duties claimed,
And to be useful as resigned she aimed;
Neatly she dressed, nor vainly seemed t' expect,
Pity for grief, or pardon for neglect;
But when her wearied parents sunk to sleep,
She sought her place to meditate and weep;
Then to her mind was all the past displayed,
That faithful memory brings to sorrow's aid;
For then she thought on one regretted youth,
Her tender trust, and his unquestioned truth;
In every place she wander'd where they'd been,
And sadly sacred held the parting scene."

When Lord Vavasour read in the public journals the statement of the elopement of Arlington with Lady Walmer, he totally disbelieved it. He however removed the papers from the library table, lest Emily might see them, and when questioned by Lady Vavasour who had received the news from Mrs. Preston, her *chronique scandaleuse ambulante*, as Lord Vavasour used to call her, he stoutly denied the fact and laughed at it, as one of the innumerable false rumors so frequently circulated in the journals.

When the time had elapsed which would admit of a letter arriving from Arlington, Emily cast an anxious eye at the postbag, each morning, when her father unlocked it at the breakfast table; and disappointment clouded her brow, when day after day passed without bringing any tidings of him.

At length a letter arrived, and Lord Vavasour having incautiously announced that it was from Arlington, Emily fixed her eyes on his face, while he eagerly tore it open, and ran his eyes over the contents. She saw the color mount to his cheeks, and the expression of his countenance vary from anger to contempt, and then subside into pity; and a secret presentiment of evil filled her mind.

Lady Vavasour, who had also observed the effect Arlington's letter produced on her husband, could hardly repress her impatience to demand the cause, and, with this impatience, was mingled a sort of half triumph, that her predictions, and those of her oracle, Mrs. Preston, had been verified, for it appeared certain that the letter must contain disagreeable intelligence.

How many are there in the world, like Lady Vavasour, who, though without any

peculiar malice in their natures, yet, having predicted evil of some one, rejoice that their predictions are verified—predictions often made only in the spirit of opposition, to some too partial friend of the person who excites them.

Lady Vavasour sincerely loved her daughter, and knew that her happiness depended on her union with Arlington; and yet, such is poor weak human nature—having pronounced a bad opinion of him, in opposition to her husband's too favorable one, she was not sorry to find her opinion borne out; and—shall we confess it?—almost the first thought which occurred to her liege lord, on perceiving the letter, was, the triumph it would afford to his wife, who would henceforth be more than ever disposed to maintain her own opinions, or rather those of Mrs. Preston, in opposition to his.

A few minutes' reflection, however, soon turned the current of his thoughts to his daughter, and he looked at her with such an involuntary expression of affection and pity, that she rose from the table, and approaching him, timidly intreated that he would tell her if the letter from Lord Arlington contained any very painful intelligence.

The paleness of her cheek, and the deep anxiety pictured in her looks, alarmed the affectionate father, who, embracing her fondly, replied, that Arlington was well, and that he would speak to her more fully of the letter, as soon as they should have returned from their ride.

Emily having left the room, he told Lady Vavasour, that the prospect of their daughter's marriage with Arlington was at an end; but intreated that she would not touch on the subject with Emily, until he had broken it to her.

"Well, Lord Vavasour," exclaimed his wife, "I trust you will pay more attention to my opinion, another time; I told you he was unworthy of our child;—you see I was right;—but you were so obstinately determined on thinking well of him, that you would not listen to my representation. Nay, more, I could have informed you that something very remarkable, and, I dare say very indecorous, took place in this house—yes, Lord Vavasour, beneath our very roof—for Mrs. Preston's maid, was told by Lady Walmer's maid, that when she went to her lady on the morning of her departure from here, she found her not in her chamber, and on going to the corridor, saw her slip into Lord Arlington's room, where she remained only a minute; that, curious to know why she went there, the maid slid into the room on tiptoes, and found it empty, and a letter, in her lady's writing, addressed to Lord Arlington, on the table, of which it was evident her lady herself had been the bearer. Lord Walmer left this house without seeing his wife, though they were, apparently, on the best terms when they wished us good-night; so it's quite clear, that some very improper detection must have taken place, and so Mrs. Preston informed me the next day, but I knew it was useless to tell you, as you were so determined to think well of your favorite, Lord Arlington."

"You were right, my dear," replied Lord Vavasour; "as, however true the intelligence might be, the source from which it emanated—the gossip of two ladies' maids—rendered it unfit for my ears, as well as for yours, and proves what I have often told you, that Mrs. Preston is really a most unsafe and gossipping woman, too little delicate as to the means of procuring information, and too much given to seek that which is the most unprofitable—scandal and family secrets."

Lord Vavasour turned over and over again in his mind, the best mode of breaking the bad news he had to communicate to Emily. He sent for her to the library, and having seated her by his side, took her hand affectionately within his, and thus addressed her.

"When I sanctioned your union with Lord Arlington, my dear child, I believed him to be as faultless in morals, as he is agreeable and amiable in manners. I have been deceived, and he is no longer worthy of your affection, or of your hand. The avowal of his unworthiness comes from himself; from another, I should have refused to credit it; but there is now no room for doubt, and you, my dear Emily, must think of him no more, except as one who, however entitled to our pity, can no longer claim our respect."

"But is there no possibility, my father, that Lord Arlington may not be able to justify what now, perhaps, appears so much against him? No! he cannot surely be such a hypocrite, as to have seemed to love and reverence virtue and honor, while he was violating either!"

The varying color of her cheek, the trembling movement of her lips, and the eager glance with which she regarded her father, convinced him of the fearful anxiety with which she awaited his answer to this question; and his heart felt for hers, as he told her there was no hope.

"And can I then no longer esteem him?" exclaimed the agitated girl; "all else I could have borne;" and tears, bitter tears, chased each other in torrents from her eyes.

Lord Vavasour, after a few moments' reflection, and witnessing the vain efforts of his daughter, to suppress the anguish that nearly overpowered her, suddenly formed the resolution of acquainting her with the real state of Arlington's feelings and position, to the details of which she listened with breathless anxiety.

Now was revealed to her the cause of his perturbation, the morning of their rencontre in the pleasure-grounds; his embarrassment in the presence of Lady Walmer;—all stood disclosed, and pity, warm, tender pity, for Arlington, usurped the place of every other feeling in her breast.

"Oh, do not be angry with him, my dear father!" said Emily; "see you not that he has erred from misjudged sentiments of honor? Henceforth, let us think of him with kindness and pity, for he can now never be aught to us; but let me thank you, for giving me the consolation of knowing that the man I considered as my future husband, was not a hypocrite; and that, though erring, deeply erring, he is more entitled to our pity, than to blame."

Emily dried the tears that, in spite of all her good resolutions, still continued to gush from her eyes; and, trying to call up a faint smile, though the attempt proved a failure, she kissed her father's cheek, and sought the sanctuary of her chamber, there to weep over, not her own cruel disappointment, but the misery, which her heart and her reason equally told her was reserved for him she had so fondly loved.

The assurance that Arlington still cherished her image in his breast, excited her pity for him still more, though it soothed her feelings; for the youthful and pure mind turns with affright and disgust from the first proofs of deception that are forced on its inexperience. He had so often strengthened her principles of morality, by the expression of his own, that she dared not contemplate the possibility of his having been practising on her innocence, by a display of virtues foreign to his character; and it was a relief to her to know, that he had not sought guilt, though he was likely to pay its bitter penalty.

After an hour devoted to tears, which eased her oppressed heart, she sought for consolation, where alone it can be found, in supplication to the Diety; who, knowing the weakness of his creatures, can yield them a pardon and pity, that their equally erring fellow mortals seldom can accord. When she arose from her knees, her feelings were calmed, and she firmly resolved that he who was henceforth to be the companion of the wife of another, should never be thought of by her, save as a friend once loved, but, for ever lost.

The destiny of woman is to suffer; and she who escapes sorrow, may be said to be exempt from the penalties which fall to the lot of her sex. But to suffer in silence, hiding the barbed arrow in their breasts, is reserved for those women only, whose reasoning powers are strengthened by religion, and whose tenderness of heart is fortified by courage and resignation.

Emily, with the simplicity of a child, possessed all the high character of an intellectual woman. She remembered that she had duties to perform towards her parents, which no selfish indulgence of her own regrets, ought to prevent her fulfilling; and she exerted every faculty to appear cheerful and contented in their presence, though, in the solitude of her chamber, unbidden thoughts of one whom she ought to forget, would but too often intrude, fading her cheek, and dimming the lustre of her eye.

## CHAPTER XXI.

"Such is man's unhappy condition, that though the weakness of the heart has a prevailing power over the strength of the head, yet the strength of the head has but small force against the weakness of the heart."

Arlington, or Heatherfield, as we must now call him, with a sorrowful heart prepared to accompany the last remains of his father to England, that he might see them laid in the tomb of his ancestors. He wrote a few lines to Lady Walmer, stating his intention, and repeating that, this last duty towards his parents performed, he would return to her.

His journey was a melancholy one; and the reflections it occasioned in his mind, made him turn with still increased disgust from the prospect of a seclusion with her who was henceforth to be his companion.

From the moment that he reached the last fifty miles of the route to Heatherfield the symptoms of respectful sympathy of the inhabitants of each town and village, became more marked. The late Marquis of Heatherfield was known and beloved by all, and when the funeral procession

arrived at the town of Heatherfield, the property of the House of Arlington, some hundreds of the tenantry, on horseback, and in mourning, came forward to join it. The children of the charity schools, and the poor supported by the late lord's bounty, met the cavalcade near the church; and grief marked the demeanor of all, from the old and infirm, whom his beneficence had fed, to the young and helpless, to whom he extended the blessings of education.

There is none of our religious ceremonies, so imposing as the funeral service—that last duty of the living to the dead—and never was it more impressively gone through, than on this occasion. The minister who read it, had, for thirty years, been the constant witness and agent, of the judicious benevolence of *him*, he was now consigning to the grave; and they, who stood around it, had all, in a greater or less degree, experienced his munificence. The deep grief of Lord Heatherfield excited their affection and sympathy; as they attributed wholly to the loss of his father, that which had another, and perhaps, even more poignant source.

When the clergyman came to the passage, "Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery; he cometh up, and is cut down like a flower; he fleeth, as it were a shadow; and never continueth in one stay;" Arlington felt that this true picture of the brevity of human life, was consolatory to his wounded feelings; for now, that the future offered him nothing but an existence of exile and shame, he had a morbid gratification, in contemplating the probability of its short duration.

But when the earth was thrown on the coffin, every thought connected with self, was banished from his mind; and he seemed again to feel the pressure of his father's hand, and to hear his last blessing as the body slowly descended into the vault, and in a few minutes receded from his sight. Casting his tearful eyes, to take a last look at it, he discerned the vacant place which his own coffin would occupy, and the bitter thought rushed upon his mind—"Shall *I* be followed to the grave by a mourning son, and troops of lamenting friends? Ah no! all I can hope for, is pity; for my weakness and folly have deprived me of affection and respect."

The worthy Dean Vandeleur, joined him in the church-yard, and there was a gravity and coldness visible, even through the regret that he displayed for the loss of his patron and friend, as he saluted the new proprietor of Heatherfield. Conscience, that ever wakeful remembrancer, whispered to Heatherfield the cause of his coldness, from one who had loved him from his birth; the statements in the newspapers had made known his position, without its extenuating points; and he felt the blush of shame mount to his temples, as he thought, that while paying the last duties to his father, he was looked on as adulterer. The deep grief depicted in the countenance and maner of Lord Heatherfield, touched the chord of sympathy in the heart of the excellent Dean Vandeleur, who relaxed from his coldness, and while accompanying Heatherfield to his carriage, announced his intention of calling on him the following day.

The entry of Lord Heatherfield into his paternal home, was marked by the silence and tears of his dependents. They too had heard of his elopement, and while deeply sorrowing for the excellent master they had lost, they had to deplore the unworthiness of his successor. The old gray-headed servants who met him in the hall, could not utter a welcome, and he fancied their hoary locks reproached him for bringing sin and scandal to the home of his fathers. He mentally vowed that she who had caused his fall from respectability, should never come to Heatherfield, or occupy the place of his virtuous mother; and this resolution seemed to soothe his wounded feelings.

When Heatherfield rose in the morning and opened his windows, the beauty of the landscape attracted his admiration; the undulations of the ground of the park, the groups of trees, and the clear rapid river that reflected them, all claimed his pleased attention. "How Emily would have liked this place!" was the involuntary thought that suggested itself; and then came a waking dream of the happiness he was once so near enjoying, of conducting her to Heatherfield as its happy mistress, blessed, and blessing all his numerous dependents.

For a few minutes, he forgot the misery of his altered position, in the picture his imagination had created; but soon returned his recollection of the fearful reality, and he directed his glance towards the steeple of the church—seen through the trees—where he had placed the remains of his father the night before, that by being reminded of death, he might bear with less bitterness, the life his own folly had robbed of every charm.

They must have suffered deeply who turn to the grave for consolation: a few weeks ago, Heatherfield would have shrunk from such a contemplation, for then, life offered him a brilliant and unclouded prospect; but now, though he had unbounded wealth, high station, ancient descent, with youth, and health, yet all were insufficient to bestow one hour of happiness: and to this state, he had reduced himself by his own misconduct!

While at his solitary breakfast, he looked over the newspapers, and his own name in large characters, heading a leading article, drew his attention. He found it to be an account of his arrival at Dover, with the funeral cortége of the late lamented Marquis, whose sudden dissolution, it was added, had been caused by the shock occasioned by a late elopement in high life. The paper dropped from his hand, and anger and indignation filled his mind; but a few minutes reflection taught him to conquer those feelings, as he considered that all, who by one false step lay themselves open to censure, must expect to be the continual objects of its lash, even when they no longer merit it; and, though, happily for him, the statement was untrue, it might have been but too well-founded had his father known his real position, as who could tell what *might* have been the fatal effects on an exhausted frame like his, had the truth been disclosed to him. Heatherfield thanked providence again and again, that this additional misery was spared him, and that his lamented father died in happy ignorance of his enthralment.

The will of the late Marquis of Heatherfield was read the day after his interment, in the presence of Dean Vandeleur, the solicitor from London, and the agent of the estates. The landed property was strictly entailed on the male heir, but the funded and personal fortune, which was very large, was, with the exception of a few legacies to friends, and provisions for all his servants, bequeathed to his son. A codicil had been added three days before his death, in which the worthy old peer stated, that to signalise his gratification at the marriage his dear son Charles John Augustus, Lord Arlington, was on the eve of contracting with the Lady Emily Vavasour, he bequeathed to her all the jewels that were not heir-looms in the family, and he declared it to be his desire that the marriage between the said Charles John Augustus, Lord Arlington, and the said Lady Emily Vavasour, be solemnised in three months after his decease, and he prayed God to bless both his children.

When this codicil was read aloud, Lord Heatherfield felt the blood rush to his face, as it receded quickly from his heart. A sense of deep gratification at his father's high sense of the merit of Emily, was the first feeling; but then came the consciousness that he had lost her for ever, and shame that his position with regard to her should be thus exposed to those present at the perusal of the will. The good Dean looked at him with wonder, and the solicitor and agent stole glances of astonishment at each other, of which the consciousness of his own painful situation, rendered Heatherfield still more observant.

When left alone with Dean Vandeleur, he requested that worthy divine to continue to be the dispenser of all the charities hitherto supported by the late lord.

"I shall be away from England for some time," said Arlington; "and I wish my absence to be as little felt as possible by my tenants and the poor, so I beg that you will not be sparing of my purse; as an absentee owes at least this compensation to those who depend on him, if circumstances compel him to live in another country."

Such was the effect produced on Dean Vandeleur's mind, by his interview with Lord Heatherfield, that on talking it over with his wife, he expressed his conviction, that whatever might be the guilt of that nobleman, he still retained a moral sensitiveness and benevolence incompatible with a vicious mind.

"Did I not say, my dear Dean," replied the good-natured wife, "that you judged him too severely. I have loved him from his childhood, and though I do not like to speak against my sex, yet I must say that I am sure the wicked woman who seduced him, is more to be blamed than he."

"How strange is it," said the Dean, "that all you women are more given to throw censure on your own sex than on ours; there is no *esprit de sex* amongst you."

"I deny it," said the kind-hearted Mrs. Vandeleur; "but in this instance, knowing Lord Heatherfield from his boyhood, and having witnessed a thousand instances of his goodness of heart, I must naturally be more inclined to impute blame to the lady, whom I do not know, than to him. Besides, in such cases, our sex are more to be blamed than yours; our education, our habits, render such crimes more serious in our eyes, than in yours; and a woman who

breaks through the most sacred duties to gratify a guilty passion, becomes a reproach to womanhood, and, as such, is viewed by us all, with more disdain than pity."

"That is what I object to," said the Dean. "I would have you show more pity, and less disdain; and, above all, while you visit an erring woman with such severity, I would not have you receive with kindness the *cause* of her errors."

When Dean Vandeleur left Lord Heatherfield, the latter had a long interview with his steward, to whom he gave instructions as to all he wished done in his absence. He then sent for the housekeeper, Mrs. Davenport, who had been his mother's femme de chambre at his birth, and since the death of her mistress, had filled her present situation. This worthy old woman loved her young lord, as she called him, with a sincerity rarely to be met with, in these our modern days, when civilisation has weakened the bonds that formerly united master and servant. *Nous avons changé tout cela.* But have we changed it for the better? Our servants are now become bad copies of ourselves; they can perceive with lynx-eyes our vices, and copy them but too faithfully; while our virtues are not so apparent to their perception, and consequently are less followed.

Mrs. Davenport's respectful courtesies, and hopes that his lordship found every thing in good order, being ended, she begged that she might be permitted to resign her situation, and retire to a cottage in the village, which she intended to rent."

"This will be very inconvenient indeed to me, Mrs. Davenport," said Lord Heatherfield; "for, as I may be some years on the continent, it would have been a great satisfaction to me, to know that you were here."

"Then your lordship is not coming to reside here?" said Mrs. Davenport; "in that case, I certainly can remain."

Then feeling that she had said something improper, she immediately added, blushing deeply while she spoke, "Your lordship being absent from England, I shall have so much less to do, that I can retain my situation until your lordship's return."

Heatherfield felt all that was passing in her mind, and blushed too in presence of this respectable old woman, whose chagrin, at the thought of seeing his exemplary mother's place filled by *her*, who was to be the companion of his future years, he could well understand and respect.

When he had made all the necessary arrangements for his absence, Lord Heatherfield wandered from room to room, like an unquiet spirit: each object reminded him of other, and happier days; the silence and repose that reigned around, the mementoes of the lately dead, and of his mother, scattered through the apartments they had occupied, invested the place with a sanctity in his eyes; and as he dwelt on their portraits, almost starting into life from the canvass, and beaming with the same benignant looks of affection, with which they had been wont to regard him, he felt how they would have shrunk from him, could they have known the guilty alliance he had pledged himself to form—an alliance which must ever banish him from the home of his ancestors.

He sought relief from the sadness that overpowered him, by packing up with his own hands, the jewels bequeathed to Emily Vavasour by his father. They had all been worn by his mother, and though much less costly than the splendid family jewels, which were heir-looms, and had descended from father to son, for several generations, yet they were highly valuable, and chosen with great taste. A bracelet, containing a fine enamel miniature of the late Lord Heatherfield, was amongst the ornaments; it was painted when that nobleman was about the actual age of his son, and the family resemblance was so striking, that except for the difference of dress, it might have passed for a portrait of the present lord.

For a moment, Heatherfield, as he gazed on it, was tempted to keep it back; but a feeling he could not well define, induced him to send it with the other ornaments. He looked at each, and all, and pressed them to his lips, as he thought they would be touched by Emily, and a vague sense of pleasure at the idea, that these inanimate objects would be a sort of family compact between her and him, soothed his mind.

The casket containing the jewels, and a copy of the will, was sent to Lord Vavasour, with a letter from Heatherfield, in which he stated his position and feelings, with a frankness and touching truth, well calculated to excite the pity and regret of the good-natured man to whom it was addressed; he added, that he was leaving England, probably for ever, and should have embarked ere that letter reached its destination; a statement which he made

in the intention of preventing the jewels being returned.

Lord Heatherfield left his home with feelings of bitter regret; never had it appeared so beautiful in his eyes, as now, when he was bidding it adieu, perhaps for ever; and he gazed upon its outspreading woods and lawns, as if he was taking a last leave of dear friends.

A few minutes before he quitted Heatherfield, he received a letter, announcing that Lord Walmer had commenced legal proceedings against him, so that he had now all the scandalous publicity of a trial hanging over his head, from which he shrank with almost womanly sensitiveness.

To avoid passing through London, he crossed the country, and late at night, was descending the steep hill near to ——— where his route was impeded by a crowd collected round a travelling carriage and stage coach, which had (owing to the darkness of the night, or the inattention of the coachman or postilion) come in violent contact, and the carriage being the lighter of the two, had yielded to the shock, and was upset.

"The gentleman is killed!" vociferated some of the persons around the carriage, while others asserted that he was only stunned, from the violence of the overturning.

Heatherfield jumped out of his chaise, and attended by his valet de chambre, approached the carriage of the stranger, to see if he could be of any assistance. He found him supported by his servant, in a state of total insensibility, his face nearly covered by the blood which was gushing from a wound in his head; the agitated domestic urging the crowd around to send off to ———, for a surgeon, or entreating the coachman and guard of the stage-coach, to take his master to ———, while they asserted that the coach was too much injured to proceed, and one of the wheels of the carriage in which was the stranger, having come off—that could not be used.

Heatherfield proposed to the servant to remove his master into his carriage, and assisted him in the operation, and having bound up the head of the wounded man, to staunch the blood which flowed so profusely, he helped to support him during their route to ———, having sent on his own servant on one of the post-horses, to order an apartment to be made ready, and a surgeon in attendance. A few faint moans were the only indications of life given by the sufferer. Heatherfield felt his pulse, which was so weak, as to be almost imperceptible, and he feared he would expire, before they arrived at ———. The whole affair had been so hurried, that he had not inquired of the servant the name of his master, and the poor man appeared so overcome with alarm, as also from some severe contusions which he had received, that Heatherfield asked him no questions.

Arrived at ———, he assisted in bearing the unfortunate stranger to the chamber prepared for him, where a surgeon and doctor were soon in attendance. Lord Heatherfield's dress and hands were literally drenched with blood, and he started as he beheld his own image in a mirror, when passing through the room; but what was his horror and astonishment, when lights were brought close to the wounded man, and the blood removed from his face, he discovered him to be—Lord Walmer. The surgeon, after a long examination, pronounced that a concussion of the brain had taken place; and that such was the weakness of the patient, from the excessive loss of blood, that a few hours must terminate his sufferings.

To describe Lord Heatherfield's feelings, at seeing stretched before him on the bed of death, the man whom he had (though unintentionally) injured. would be impossible. Remorse and regret, were mingled in his heart, as he looked at the dying sufferer, whose hand had often clasped his in amity, and of whose hospitality he had so often partaken. Had he never known him, this catastrophe might not have occurred—so thought Heatherfield, as with the sensitiveness which belongs to remorse, he conjured up all that could still more increase the bitterness of his feelings. He left not the side of Lord Walmer for the whole night, while the medical people tried all means that art could dictate to afford him relief, but all was in vain, for he breathed his last as day dawned, without having once opened his eyes, or given any proof of life, except faint groans, from the moment of the accident, which terminated so fatally.

Nearly exhausted by mental agitation and bodily fatigue, Heatherfield left the chamber of death, and threw himself on a bed, where he sank into a heavy slumber, in which the scene that had just occurred, was acted over again in dreams, with all the fantastic horrors that dreams alone can create. Lady Walmer appeared to his excited imagination, her cheeks pale as death; her hair dishevelled, and her eyes

glaring, with a poniard in her hand, which she first struck into the bosom of Emily Vavasour, and then drawing forth the reeking weapon, stabbed her husband, whose blood spouted over his murdress and Heatherfield; who awoke shuddering with horror, his brow bedewed with cold perspiration, and sick at heart, as the painful reality of the death of Lord Walmer recurred to his recollection.

The moment of awaking, after the first night of any loss or catastrophe, is always dreadful. The feelings return with renewed poignancy to the evil, forgotten for a few hours in slumber, and the physical force the frame has received from repose, renders the mind more alive to the suffering, which the torpor of exhaustion had previously blunted, though not subdued.

He made many attempts before he could write to Lady Walmer; but at length he stated to her the event that had taken place, which he broke to her as gently as he could. His remorse was too deep, to admit of his repressing the expressions it dictated, and bitterly did he accuse himself, for ever having abused the hospitality of Lord Walmer, by addressing vows of love to his wife, who ought to have been sacred in his eyes, from the confidence with which the husband received and trusted him. How differently did Lord Heatherfield now view his past conduct! A few months before, such is the force of example and evil contact, he would have seen nothing very heinous in it; every young man of fashion of his acquaintance made love to some married woman, and in most cases, those ladies were the wives of their friends, as it is only in such cases that facilities are afforded for forming such unhallowed attachments. But since Heatherfield had left his London associates, and yielded to the beneficial effects of a pure and virtuous affection, he had learned to think otherwise; and his eyes once opened to the enormity of vice, however it may be gilded over by conventional temporising, he could never again contemplate it without disgust, or practise it without self-reproach and shame. Still the worldly weakness of being guided by a false principle of honor, adhered to him, and to this was he ready to sacrifice not only his own happiness, but that of another, dearer, far dearer to him than self.

## CHAPTER XXII.

"Paris! ville de prestige, où le regard est juge, où l'apparence est reine; où la beauté est dans la tournure, la conduite dans les manières, l'esprit dans le bon goût; où les prétentions dénaturent, où l'homme le plus distingué rougit de ses qualités primitives et s'efforce d'en imiter d'impossibles à son naturel; où la vie est un long combat entre un caractère de naissance qu'on subit, et un caractère d'adoption qu'on s'impose; où chacun est en travail d'hypocrisie; où l'esprit léger se fait pédant, où chacun vit des autres avec de la fortune, imite celui qui le copie, et emprunte souvent le costume qu'on lui a volé. Ville de graves folies et d'innocentes faussetés!"

Cecile de Bethune attended her father to the Duchesse de Montcalm, where she found assembled a party, chosen purposely to meet her.

Madame la Duchesse's hotel, in the Faubourg St. Germaine, was one of the last strong-holds of the ancient régime; the fortune of the duchesse, enabled her to refurnish it with more than its pristine splendor, uniting all the modern inventions of luxurious comfort, to the rich style of the fourteenth Louis. The walls of her salons displayed the gorgeous tints of Tintoretto, Paul Veronese, Moroni, Bonifacio, Bernardo Luini, and, though last, not least, the bright hues of Titian, and Gorgioni. Commodes of buhl, lac, and marquetterie, covered with vases of ancient porcelain de Sevres, were scattered through the salons, with tripods of ormoulu, supporting censers, with fragrant odors, which sent forth a perfume through the vast apartments. Mirrors, descending from the ceiling to the ground, with jardiniers in front, filled with the rarest flowers, divided the compartments of the rooms, and silken hangings, of the richest materials, carpets of the softest texture and most vivid tints, with fauteuils, and sofas of the most varied forms, finest carving, and most luxurious constructions, completed the ensemble of this splendid residence. The servants were well dressed, the anti-rooms clean and well-lighted, the company *bien mise*, and Madame la Duchesse, amiable and prevenante, though a little too vividly attentive to the personal appearance of her "*charmante cousine*," as she called Cecile.

The Comte de Bethune anticipated the observations which he saw the duchesse was on the point of giving utterance to, by apologising for the toilette of his daughter.

"We only arrived to-day," said he, "and had not time to send for a chapeau; but if Madame la Duchesse will have the kindness to superintend *les emplettes de ma fille*, she will be but too much flattered."

The duchesse raised her glass, and examining Cecile with a nonchalance very embarrassing to the object of her scrutiny, elevated her shoulders and eyebrows with a true French ease, and with a half frown and smile, observed that it was quite dreadful to think, how the barbarous English had disfigured her *petite cousine*. She was quite sure, that when *mise à la Française*, she would be charming, for though her *tournure* was *malheureusement Anglaise*, her physiognomy was happily French. She called Cecile to her, to examine her still more minutely; and while the timid girl indignantly submitted to be turned round, the duchesse burst into a laugh, rather louder than high-breeding would permit, on discovering that some appendages considered indispensable to a French woman's toilette were omitted, and exclaimed, "*Que les Anglais sont droles, quel idée, imaginez vous, mesdames;*" turning to half-a-dozen ladies who formed a circle round her—"*la pauvre petite, n'a pas de fause tournure.*"

"*Est il possible?*" cried all the ladies at once; "*quel malheur ou n'aurait jamais cru dans notre siécle voir un pareil manque de savoir s'habiller.*"

Cecile felt her delicacy and pride equally wounded by this unceremonious treatment; the color rose to her cheeks, as she caught the eyes of a few of the old habitués of the salon fixed on her, and the tears almost escaped from her eyes, as she stood trembling and blushing before her examiners.

"*Eh bien, mesdames,*" exclaimed la duchesse, "to-morrow you will see *ma petite cousine, autre chose*, when all these tire-bouchon curls"—drawing her fingers through the silken ringlets of Cecile—"have been arranged by Frederick, and crowned by un joli chapeau d'Herbault; when this person," laying her hands on the slender waist of the abashed girl, "which now looks so *gauche et guindée*, is inclosed in a corset de Varon, and a robe de Victorine, she will not be reconnoissable. Yes, I predict, that *ma petite cousine* in three months, will look as if she had never left Paris."

The duchesse then motioned Cecile to a chair, to which she tottered, rather than walked, feeling that every eye was upon her; and her embarrassment was not decreased by hearing the duchesse observe to the lady next her, "*Regardez en grace, Madame, la pauvre petite ne sait pas marcher.*"

The Comte de Bethune approached his *belle cousine*, as he called the duchesse, to thank her for her kindness to Cecile, and that lady having observed the heightened color of the poor girl, remarked to her father, that la petite appeared to have a great deal of *mauvaise honte*, which they must endeavour to conquer, for nothing gave such an idea of being *mal elève;* a dictum to which the sapient comte assented.

The duchesse then proposed engaging a fencing-master for Cecile, saying it was absolutely necessary, *pour dégourdir* her arms, and for giving her self-confidence; adding, that when she had made some progress *en tirant les armes*, she would engage a dancing-master: "*enfin mon ami,*" continued she, "we must polish this rough diamond, which only requires to be re-set à la Francaise, to show its beauty."

Cecile listened to this monologue, with no less astonishment than dismay; and the high tone of madame la duchesse's voice allowed her not to miss a single word of it. Was she, who had been educated with such care, who had received lessons from the best masters England could furnish, and was universally considered not to have shamed her instructors—was she now to be condemned to commence afresh? Was she who had been presented at the British Court, and shone in the most distinguished of the English aristocratic circles, now considered too awkard to take her place in a French salon, and above all—for this last wounded Cecile more than all the rest—was the elève of her dear lost friend, Lady Ayrshire—one of the most accomplished, high-bred, and dignified women that England could boast—to be treated as an ignorant and unformed girl, whose *gaucherie* and *mauvais honte* required correction? The *amour propre* of poor Cecile—for who is without *amour propre?*—was deeply wounded; and her mortification gave her an air of timidity and embarrassment, that confirmed in the shallow minds of the persons around her, their erroneous impressions relative to her.

Those who had seen Cecile de Bethune in England, forming one of the brightest ornaments of its highest circles, admired and applauded by all; her gracefulness, beauty, and polished manners universally acknowledged, surrounded by admiring acqnaintance and cordial friends, would have found it difficult to recognise her in the frightened and agitated girl in the salon of the Duchesse de Montcalm. She felt confounded and humiliated. Had she

then been in a vain delusion all the previous portion of her life?—had all the commendations bestowed on her proceeded from flattery? These were the questions she asked herself; for Cecile had yet to learn that what is considered graceful and dignified in rational England, passes for gaucherie and stiffness, in frivolous France. She blamed herself for not preserving her self-possession, as her sense of good-breeding told her that all the désagremens she had encountered proceeded from the obtuse brusquerie of the duchesse, which she ought to have met with dignified coldness. But, at nineteen, it is difficult to be dignified with those who have prejudged us to be unformed and awkward, and any assumption of dignity on the part of Cecile, would have been totally lost on the persons with whom she was now associated, or mistaken for *mauvais humeur*.

*Maniere* and *esprit*, are the two objects which all French women aim at acquiring. The first, according to their notions, consists in an air degagé, that is to say, a perfect freedom from timidity in their demeanor and movements, and an aplomb in all situations, and under every circumstance in which they may happen to be placed. They must be enabled to enact the role of each character they wish to personify; for a French woman is always acting, her life is a comedy or tragedy, as events occur; but, whichever it may be, it finds her prepared for her part. It is not that they cannot, and do not feel as others do, but it is that from infancy, they are taught to refer their actions and conversation to the effect to be produced by both on others; the *qu'en dira-t-on*, is always present to their minds, and to be cited as bearing affliction gracefully, and prosperity with bon ton, is as essential in their eyes to be appropriately dressed for either role, and much more important than the real causes or effects of them. A French woman is not content with being a good wife and mother—and there are hundreds in every class who are both—but she must dramatise the part, to produce a scenic effect. The more homely virtue and the happiness it never fails to produce, is not sufficient—she must be applauded—hence she is always an actress. Her salon is the theatre where she plays her principal part, and that it may be brilliantly performed, *esprit* is absolutely necessary. All her study is to acquire and display this French essential; for this she dips into metaphysics, skims the froth of political economy, runs over every new production, and what is more difficult, occasionally listens to the *membres de la Chambre des Paris et des Deputés*, and the *savans* who frequent her soirées. She repays herself for this last mentioned sacrifice by giving her opinions with equal self-confidence on the most knotty point of politics, or abstruse science, as on the last new mode; and has at command a certain jargon and tone of persiflage, half-laughing, half-serious, which passes current for wit, and gains for her the flattering distinction of being quoted as having *beaucoup d'esprit*. Every Frenchwoman is *mannièrée;* even while a child in the nursery, and when arrived at maturity, it has become so natural to her that it cannot be left off. All who possess not this distinction, are considered *gauche* and *mal elevé:* it was, therefore, no wonder that Cecile in the circle of the Duchesse de Montcalm, was treated as a young person totally unformed.

We once heard a French lady give the preference to an artificial rose made by Natier, (the fashionable artificial flower maker at Paris,) to a natural one of great beauty, plucked in a parterre. She asserted that there was no comparison; the rose of Natier was much more elegant, the petals more delicate, and *la couleur plus tendre;* "*enfin*," as she added," it is more like my beau ideal of a rose than the one from the garden." This French lady's estimation of the artificial rose, may serve as an example of the opinion of all her sex in France, as to natural and acquired grace, beauty, and manner; and the well-bred English woman, who will not fly to *faire l' esprit et briller dans les salons*, will be sure to be counted as stupid, awkward, and ennuieuse.

This innate love of display, and invariable system of acting, of which we accuse French women, is, however, accompanied by so many good qualities, that we should be wanting in justice were we not to acknowledge them. Good temper, good nature, and a wish of obliging, are peculiar characteristics in them, and no country can boast more affectionate wives, mothers, sisters, and friends, than can France; though, unfortunately, the *exhibition* of each character is too much considered.

The visitors at the Duchesse de Montcalm's soirées were increased, if not enlivened, by the presence of some of the members of the Chambre de Pairs, with a sprinkling of *savans*, and a few young men of family. No name was to be heard pro-

nounced in her salons, that did not belong to l'ancien régime, and noble birth, and ultra politics, were the only requisites for obtaining a favorable reception in them. On the noblesse of the imperial dynasty she looked with contempt, if not horror; she blamed *la famille royale*, for having tolerated them; and never spoke of Napoleon, but as a *charlatan* set up by the *canaille*, to bring legitimate royalty into disrepute. She had a thousand *jeu d' esprits* to repeat on this subject, which were sure to be applauded by the *habitués* of her salons, who had continued to applaud them ever since the restoration. On one occasion, when descanting on the glories of Henri Quatre, a person present having ventured to observe that Henri Quatre was *le Roi de la Canaille*, she made her reputation as a bel esprit, by answering, that Napoleon was *le canaille des Rois*. By such bon mots, a person may sometimes make a reputation in France, on which he may live for years, provided the speaker is a person of some fashion.

The young men presented a strange melange of frivolity and pedantry, the latter, like the English costume they had adopted, often rendered ridiculous by the habits induced by the former; for the grave English dress in which a French elegant envelops his person, looks not more *outré*, contrasted with the vivacious movements of the young Parisian who sports it, than does the pretending pedantry they affect, when contrasted with the natural gaiety and frivolity of their characters, which break forth continually.

Cecile drew comparisons between the young men now around, and those she had been accustomed to meet in England. The cold politeness, yet respectful civilities of the English, were much more to her taste than the exaggerated compliments and obtrusive attentions of the French; and her thoughts often recurred to Desbrow while impressed by the forcible contrasts offered to him in the persons of the petits maitres who surrounded her.

Previous to their leaving the Duchesse de Montcalm's, that lady beckoned the Comte de Bethune to her, and they conversed in a low voice for a few minutes. Cecile apprehended some new subject of annoyance, nor was she disappointed when her father, during their drive home, acquainted her that la duchesse had the goodness to give up Madame de la Rue, one of her dames de compagnie, to act as chaperon to Cecile until she was married; as *les convenances* exacted that a young lady, even though under a father's roof, required the sanction of a female chaperon.

Cecile heard this in silence, because she had observed her father's character sufficiently to be aware that any representations to induce him to change any plan connected with his ideas of *les convenances*, would be not only unavailing, but ill-received; yet, a sigh escaped her, when she reflected that this last disagreement would destroy the consolation she hoped to enjoy in pursuing in solitude her accustomed avocations; and she looked back with renewed regret to the happy hours passed in dear England and Scotland, in the privacy of her chamber, left free to follow her various occupations whenever she wished to be alone.

The porter, attired in his night habiliments, loudly yawned while he opened the ponderous porte cocher to admit them; and Baptiste, awaked by the loud ringing of the bell, ran forward with eyes only half open, and a lamp half-extinguished, sending forth a most offensive effluvia, to receive them in the vestibule, and lighted them to the anti-chamber, where the mingled odor of the tobacco and garlick with which he had been regaling himself, nearly overpowered the olfactory nerves of poor Cecile.

The Comte de Bethune conducted his daughter to her chamber, and having touched her forehead with his lips, wished her good night at the door; but no sooner had Cecile entered the room,—whose cold and dreary aspect, seen by the faint light of the solitary wax-candle in her hand, struck her as being even still more cheerless, when contrasted with the brilliant salons in which she had passed the evening,—than alarmed by some noise in the chamber, she turned to the quarter whence she thought it proceeded; at the same instant the candlestick was struck from her grasp, and she was left in total darkness.

In the first moment of terror, a cry escaped her; but in the next, her impulse was to regain the door, and she was proceeding in what she imagined to be its direction, when something struck against her cheek, and in the same moment she fell over a tabouret that impeded her passage. She called aloud for assistance, and was relieved by seeing Madame le Moine enter, who immediately explained the cause of her alarm, by venting sundry maledictions on *les chauve-souris*, who were flitting through the murky atmosphere of the gloomy apartment, and who during the day concealed themselves in the draperies.

sisting, and observing, as each fresh article of dress was drawn forth, "Oh! mademoiselle, what an outré canezou! it has been out of fashion in Paris for more than six weeks;" or, "what an ugly robe, or ill made shoes!"

When she met her father at the breakfast table, he told her that he had ordered the carriage to take her to the Duchesse de Montcalm's, and placing a little spangled purse in her hand, he begged she might not be sparing of its contents, as it was absolutely necessary that her whole toilette should be remodelled.

Cecile thanked him, and was on the point of explaining that she stood not in need of pecuniary assistance, as Lord Ayrshire had liberally provided for all possible wants, real or imaginary; but, a moment's reflection told her that, with her father's extreme susceptibility and pride, he might take offence at Lord Ayrshire's generosity, and therefore she remained silent.

When breakfast was concluded, Madame de la Rue was announced, and Cecile could with difficulty repress the smile that rose to her lips as she fixed her eyes on her future chaperon.

Madame de la Rue was a lady of a certain, or rather uncertain age; for, whether she was fifty-five, or ten years more, it would be impossible for the most perfect judge to ascertain, thanks to the quantity of pearl-powder, rouge, and false curls, with which she had covered herself. The chinks and wrinkles, that time had traced in her visage, were filled up by a coat of white and red, so thickly laid on, that it made her countenance resemble more the face of a clown in a pantomime, than any attempt at copying nature. Her eyebrows presented a straight, heavy line of black, giving a fierceness to the twinkling gray eyes, over which they protruded, and her crépé curls, of raven hue, rose in spiral form, over a brow, offering a surface like a pumice-stone. Her wide mouth, each time it opened, seemed to endeavor to reach her ears, and the tremulous motion of the false teeth that filled it, gave the idea of a wooden representation of a witch, acted on by wires, such as are seen in toy-shops. Her figure was tall and lanky; her dress la derniere mode; and her air offered a strange mixture of playful vivacity, dignified humility, and conscious superiority.

She tottered into the room, with that indescribable movement of helplessness and coquetry, that peculiarly belongs to Parisians, demanded milles pardons, no one could tell for what, and declared that Monsieur le Comte, and Mademoiselle de Bethune, were *mille fois trop bonne*, merely because the first offered her a chair, and the second received her with politeness.

Madame was in a perpetual flutter; at one moment pinching her dry lips, at the evident risk of losing her false teeth, and at the next, arranging her curls, or her dress, smiling all the time with all her might, and by turns looking, as she thought, insinuating, vivacious, or sentimental, as best suited the turn of the comte's remarks.

She stated that she had taken the liberty of bringing with her two favorites, from whom she could not bear to be separated—her little dog, Bijou, and her parrot, Coco; both, she added, shared her couch; and here she affected to blush, and throw down her eyes—and were so attached to her, that she should be guilty of ingratitude—a vice unknown to *les cœurs Français bien nés*—did she not feel passionately attached to them. Were she asked, as was the Roman Cornelia, to show her jewels, she would show her Bijou and Coco, as the Roman matron showed her children—and here, the false teeth were displayed even to their gold fastenings, by the grin with which Madame de la Rue applauded her own attempt at a classical allusion.

The carriage being announced, the comte requested Madame de la Rue, to conduct Cecile to the Duchesse de Montcalm's, to commence the arduous operation of shopping; and having again and again requested his daughter to leave the choice of her purchases entirely to the duchesse, he handed her to the peristyle.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

"Les reflexions que le malheur excite ne sont point sans avantage pour un jeune homme; car cela l'habitue à penser; et l'homme qui ne pense pas n'est jamais rien."

Lord Heatherfield, finding the servant of Lord Walmer confined to his bed, by the injuries he had sustained the night before, took on himself the task of apprising his lordship's agent, whose address the valet had given him, of the melancholy catastrophe that had taken place, and ordered every mark of respect to be paid to the remains of the unfortunate nobleman.

He was on the point of leaving the inn, when Sir Harry Villebois arrived, and his

"*Mais que voulez vous, mademoiselle,*" exclaimed she, "they have been so long the undisputed tenants of our hotel, that they think they may remain unmolested. It was very stupid of me not to have prepared you for these nocturnal visitants."

While she was speaking, innumerable bats continued flying about the room, to the terror of poor Cecile, who had never before come in contact with any thing so disgusting, and having expressed her alarm, Madame le Moine tried to re-assure her, by declaring they would do her no harm.

"I have hundreds of them in my room," said she, "and though they frequently fly against me, and tap my cheeks when I sleep, still they do not bite, as I dare be sworn those in England do; but there, *chaque bête est mechante*, while here, they are only lively."

The prejudice of the garrulous French woman extorted a smile from Cecile; but still her accounts of the docility of Parisian bats, reconciled not her young mistress to the idea of having her cheeks tapped by them when she slept.

"Oh! if that alarms you," said Madame le Moine, "I have only to draw the damask curtains of your bed closely, and pin them round, and then I defy any bat to approach you."

Cecile carefully examined the interior of the bed, and having ascertained that it had no inhabitant, she adopted Madame le Moine's plan, and then told her she might depart.

"*Comment donc, mademoiselle,*" said the old woman; "am I not to have the honor of undressing you? I sat up purposely to offer my services."

Cecile told her, that she never required any aid at night; and the old woman looking at her for a few moments, with astonishment painted in her countenance, shrugged her shoulders, turned up her eyes, and then exclaimed: "*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!* the English are the strangest race on earth! Not want any assistance at night! the moment that a French lady likes the most to chat with her femme de chambre, and hear all that is going on in the hotel or the faubourg. Well, well, *chacun à son goût;* but, if before the revolution, any one had told me that a descendant of this ancient house could go to bed without her femme de chambre, I would have pronounced it to be a calumny."

All this was said sotto voce, but loud enough to be heard by Cecile, who could not refrain from smiling at observing how much this rejection of her attendance had caused her to sink in the estimation of Madame le Moine.

"Mademoiselle will pardon me," said the old woman, "if I suggest that now mademoiselle is returned to her own country, it would be more consistent with *les convenances*, that she should adopt *la mise Française*. Those long tire bouchon curls look terrible, and mademoiselle's robe quite disfigures her; I have purchased le *petit Courier des Dames* for the last week, in order that mademoiselle may see how a French lady ought to look; *le voila*," (taking it up from the table,) "see *ma chere demoiselle*, how graceful, how noble, what small waists, what fulness in the jupe! I am sure there must be fifteen yards of silk to make that robe, and the one mademoiselle wears looks not to have above ten or eleven. It is dreadful, quite dreadful, to see a young lady of French birth so disfigured! Had you been English, I should have said nothing, for no one expects them to dress or look like other people."

"Here again," thought Cecile, "is a lesson on the toilette, and *les convenances;* the two points which seem to occupy all a French woman's attention, in whatever class of life, she may find herself placed; for the tirade of Madame le Duchesse de Montcalm differs in little more from the more homely dissertation of Madame le Moine—the feeling and prejudice that dictated both are the same. Oh! would I were in dear happy England, where dress does not form the principal subject of conversation, and where people are content to attend to propriety, without putting forward their pretensions to it on every trifling occasion."

The wind shook the heavy casements of the windows, and whistled through the ill-jointed door-frames, and the owl screamed, joining its discordant notes to the howling of the blast, as Cecile counted the weary hours while sleep closed not her eyes. The flickering light of her night-lamp served only to show the dreary loneliness of the vast chamber, and she could have fancied herself the heroine of some tale of romance, shut up in a deserted chateau, had not her mind been formed of too stern stuff to give way to such idle imaginings. At length slumber weighed down her lids; and she awoke not until Madame le Moine came to announce that Monsieur le Comte was dressing.

Cecile hurried through the duties of her toilette, that her father might not be kept waiting, Madame le Moine officiously as-

sisting, and observing, as each fresh article of dress was drawn forth, "Oh! mademoiselle, what an outré canezou! it has been out of fashion in Paris for more than six weeks;" or, "what an ugly robe, or ill made shoes!"

When she met her father at the breakfast table, he told her that he had ordered the carriage to take her to the Duchesse de Montcalm's, and placing a little spangled purse in her hand, he begged she might not be sparing of its contents, as it was absolutely necessary that her whole toilette should be remodelled.

Cecile thanked him, and was on the point of explaining that she stood not in need of pecuniary assistance, as Lord Ayrshire had liberally provided for all possible wants, real or imaginary; but, a moment's reflection told her that, with her father's extreme susceptibility and pride, he might take offence at Lord Ayrshire's generosity, and therefore she remained silent.

When breakfast was concluded, Madame de la Rue was announced, and Cecile could with difficulty repress the smile that rose to her lips as she fixed her eyes on her future chaperon.

Madame de la Rue was a lady of a certain, or rather uncertain age; for, whether she was fifty-five, or ten years more, it would be impossible for the most perfect judge to ascertain, thanks to the quantity of pearl-powder, rouge, and false curls, with which she had covered herself. The chinks and wrinkles, that time had traced in her visage, were filled up by a coat of white and red, so thickly laid on, that it made her countenance resemble more the face of a clown in a pantomime, than any attempt at copying nature. Her eyebrows presented a straight, heavy line of black, giving a fierceness to the twinkling gray eyes, over which they protruded, and her crépé curls, of raven hue, rose in spiral form, over a brow, offering a surface like a pumice-stone. Her wide mouth, each time it opened, seemed to endeavor to reach her ears, and the tremulous motion of the false teeth that filled it, gave the idea of a wooden representation of a witch, acted on by wires, such as are seen in toy-shops. Her figure was tall and lanky; her dress la derniere mode; and her air offered a strange mixture of playful vivacity, dignified humility, and conscious superiority.

She tottered into the room, with that indescribable movement of helplessness and coquetry, that peculiarly belongs to Parisians, demanded milles pardons, no one could tell for what, and declared that Monsieur le Comte, and Mademoiselle de Bethune, were *mille fois trop bonne*, merely because the first offered her a chair, and the second received her with politeness.

Madame was in a perpetual flutter; at one moment pinching her dry lips, at the evident risk of losing her false teeth, and at the next, arranging her curls, or her dress, smiling all the time with all her might, and by turns looking, as she thought, insinuating, vivacious, or sentimental, as best suited the turn of the comte's remarks.

She stated that she had taken the liberty of bringing with her two favorites, from whom she could not bear to be separated—her little dog, Bijou, and her parrot, Coco; both, she added, shared her couch; and here she affected to blush, and throw down her eyes—and were so attached to her, that she should be guilty of ingratitude—a vice unknown to *les cœurs Français bien nés*—did she not feel passionately attached to them. Were she asked, as was the Roman Cornelia, to show her jewels, she would show her Bijou and Coco, as the Roman matron showed her children—and here, the false teeth were displayed even to their gold fastenings, by the grin with which Madame de la Rue applauded her own attempt at a classical allusion.

The carriage being announced, the comte requested Madame de la Rue, to conduct Cecile to the Duchesse de Montcalm's, to commence the arduous operation of shopping; and having again and again requested his daughter to leave the choice of her purchases entirely to the duchesse, he handed her to the peristyle.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

"Les reflexions que le malheur excite ne sont point sans avantage pour un jeune homme; car cela l'habitue à penser; et l'homme qui ne pense pas n'est jamais rien."

Lord Heatherfield, finding the servant of Lord Walmer confined to his bed, by the injuries he had sustained the night before, took on himself the task of apprising his lordship's agent, whose address the valet had given him, of the melancholy catastrophe that had taken place, and ordered every mark of respect to be paid to the remains of the unfortunate nobleman.

He was on the point of leaving the inn, when Sir Harry Villebois arrived, and his

feelings may be more easily imagined than described, when that gentleman, on hearing every particular of the dreadful accident of the night before, and the charitable part of Lord Heatherfield had taken in it, informed him that Lord Walmer was on his route to challenge him to fight a duel, and that he, Sir Harry, was to join the deceased at ———, two stages nearer to Heatherfield Park, to be his friend, and the bearer of the challenge.

Sir Harry explained that, after Lord Walmer commenced proceedings against Lord Heatherfield, he discovered that he had not evidence sufficient to procure a divorce; this enraged him, and some statement in the papers having increased his angry feelings, he determined to call Lord Heatherfield out, and repeatedly declared that the affair should only terminate with the existence of one of the parties. It was the man whose life he was about to seek, that had vainly tried to save his, and watched by his dying bed, with such deep regret.

The ways of Providence are inscrutable; had Lord Walmer lived a few hours longer, Heatherfield must have given him the meeting he was so bent on demanding; and though he was determined, in case of such an event, to receive Lord Walmer's fire, but not to return it, still, his own life might, nay, most probably would, have been the sacrifice, and he would have been sent out of the world with all his sins on his head.

Lord Heatherfield was a brave man, physically, and morally brave, but he was a Christian, and as such, could not contemplate a sudden death, without feelings of awe; hence, he reflected deeply on the results that had followed, and might still follow, his liaison with Lady Walmer, and his dislike towards her consequently increased.

The marriage settlement of Lady Walmer secured her a jointure of five thousand a-year; and she was now freed from the fear and scandal of an action of damages and a divorce. The house in London was also hers, for her life, so that she would find herself in affluent circumstances, and delivered from all restraint, which, to her daring spirit, and capricious mind, was ample consolation for the death of the husband she had wronged.

To join her now, Heatherfield felt, would be as indelicate as indecorous; he wrote to her again, stating his intention of retiring to an estate of his, in Wales, where he should remain for some months, and where her letters would find him. He also wrote a long letter to Desbrow inviting him, if he wished to perform an act of charity, to come to him in Wales; and having taken a cordial farewell of Sir Harry Villebois, whose frankness and goodnature had won his favorable opinion, he set out on his journey.

Impressed as he was with the melancholy scene of death which he had left, and which cast a deep feeling of sadness over his mind, still a weight was taken from his heart, as he reflected that he was now freed, for some months at least, from going to France, and meeting Lady Walmer. He hardly dared to indulge himself in the vague hopes, which often suggested themselves, that he might never see her again; for his vanity led him to believe that she loved him too well, not to persevere in urging him to become her husband, when the period prescribed by etiquette, had elapsed. Had any of Heatherfield's friends been placed in *his* situation, his hopes of their release, through the inconstancy of the lady, would have been very sanguine, but, even though a man judges unfavorably of a woman, whom he believes attached to him, such is his vanity, that he is always prone to believe the passion *he* inspires, is more likely to be durable than that inspired by others.

The second day of Heatherfield's journey, he arrived, late at night, at Capel Carrig, and was told the inn was so crowded, that he must be content with an inferior bedroom. He sought it soon after, and was requested by the courtesying chamber-maid, to make as little noise as possible, as a lady, who was not quite well, slept in the next room, which was only divided from his, by a wooden partition.

Lord Heatherfield carefully obeyed the injunctions given to him, and being fatigued, soon fell asleep. He was awaked, at an early hour, by the movement in the next chamber, and, in a few minutes, he became all attention, when a low, sweet voice, every intonation of which had been treasured in his memory, stole on his greedy ear.

"How have you slept, my dear child?" inquired a female, in tones which he instantly recognised to be Lady Vavasour's.

"Better, much better, dear mother," replied Emily, for it was she who had occupied the room next his.

"Has that cruel pain in the side again tormented you, my love?" asked the anxious parent.

"Much less, dearest mother; and I feel infinitely better to-day."

"God be thanked!" God be thanked!" murmured Lady de Vavasour; "I must take the good tidings to your father;" and so saying, she left the room.

Heatherfield felt overpowered with emotion; that dear, sweet voice, which had never addressed him but with affection, thrilled to his very heart. His Emily—ah! no longer his—but still loved—adored—she had been ill—was still suffering!—was *he*, could *he* be the cause? A pleasure, mingled with sadness, followed this thought; but alarm for an object so tenderly loved, made him tremble, as he again and again recurred to the cruel pain in the side referred to by Lady de Vavasour.

He listened with breathless attention to every movement in the next room, and her toilette being completed, he heard Emily dismiss her femme de chambre, with instructions to return in half an hour. He rose from his bed with noiseless step, and, his room being still darkened, he perceived the light coming in from some chinks in the aperture of the ill-jointed boards of the partition, which, in distending, had broken sundry small cracks in the paper which covered it.

To one of these small slits he applied his eye, and beheld Emily kneeling on a chair, offering up her morning prayer. She was much thinner and paler, than when he had last seen her, but she had never appeared so lovely to him as at this moment. The look of deep devotion in her dove-like eyes, the pure and angelic expression of her beautiful countenance, had something in them that affected Heatherfield even to tears. He could distinguish each word of her prayer, so distinctly did her clear, and sweetly modulated voice pronounce it; but his feelings may be judged, when he heard his own name murmured in faint accents, as she beseeched the Almighty to pardon his errors, to guide him through the mazy path of life, and to bless him, here, and hereafter.

There was a solemnity such as he had never previously experienced in the whole tone of Heatherfield's feelings, while he listened to this touching display of her purity and piety, this tender union of earthly affections and heavenly aspirations. He could have prostrated himself before this angelic girl, not to profess the passion which he had never ceased to entertain for her, but the reverence, the gratitude, she excited in his own soul, and his deep sense of his own unworthiness to approach her.

When Emily rose from her knees, a heavenly calm was impressed on her face a faint blush tinged her fair cheeks, and the inspired pencil of Raphael never portrayed a more seraphic countenance than hers as Heatherfield now gazed on it. Her mother just then entered the room, and led her daughter from it, gently supporting her and drawing a wrapping shawl over her form, attentions which Emily repaid by looks of love, that Heatherfield would have given worlds to receive and merit.

The window of this room, looked into the court-yard of the inn, where he saw the travelling coach of Lord Vavasour, drawn near the door, and the servants arranging the luggage. He hastily dressed himself, and took his station at the window, whence he soon beheld Emily led to the coach between her father and mother; but as she was about to enter it, his own carriage was drawn up, and his servant stood uncovered before it, lowly bowing.

Emily started, and uttered a faint exclamation, as she recognised the arms on the carriage, and the servant; but after a moment's pause, she recovered her self-possession, and was assisted into the coach by her father, and the party being seated, the carriage drove rapidly on, the servants on the box behind, exchanging salutations with Heatherfield's servant, who looked after them with a wistful air, as if he regretted that they were going different routes.

This unexpected rencontre had renewed, with fresh force, the attachment of Emily's lover for her. He now felt the utter impossibility of ever becoming the husband of another, even though all hope of aspiring to be hers was over. Well did he know the rigidity of Lady Vavasour's religious and moral opinions, and the influence they must exercise over her husband and daughter. Could he expect, even were he free from all claims which Lady Walmer might assert, that Lady Vavasour would grant the hand of her pure and innocent child, to a man who stood branded before the world as a seducer and an adulterer? No! he felt there was no hope of such happiness for him; but still, a life of singleness, the power of leading a solitary existence, was comparative happiness, to becoming the companion of one woman, while his whole soul was devoted to another.

The more he reflected on Emily's charms, the less could he contemplate any future alliance with Lady Walmer. Emily, on her knees, praying for him, was continually present to his imagination. He

had seen her in scenes of gaiety and splendor, with all the adornment that dress could bestow, where her beauty attracted the admiration of all, but never had she beamed on his eyes with such irresistible charms, as when pale and suffering, in a simple travelling dress, and in the paltry room of an inn, he marked the pure and holy expression of her angelic face, as she offered up her prayers to the Almighty. She seemed, indeed, an angel, who exiled from her natural sphere, was praying to be restored to it; and her presence shed a sanctity over the chamber she occupied, that made Heatherfield, when he entered it, (which he did the moment after the carriage, that contained her, had driven away,) feel as if he was in a temple dedicated to the Deity. He reverentially pressed to his lips the cushion on which she had knelt, and the pillow on which her head had reposed, and he was overjoyed at finding on the table, the bouquet, she had worn the preceding day, and of which he possessed himself, as a treasure never to be parted with. He placed the faded flowers, wrapped carefully in a paper, near his heart, and blessed the chance that had again given Emily to his sight, and proved to him that he was still remembered by her with interest.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

"When I see age moving through scenes of gaiety and pleasure, its wrinkles concealed beneath a mask of paint, and its wig wreathed with flowers. I am reminded of the deaths' heads which the ancients introduced at their festivals, to recal to their memories the brevity of life, and make them enjoy with more zest the present."

When Cecile reached the vestibule, attended by Madame de la Rue, her father's equipage attracted her wonder, and provoked a smile, which not even the annoyance of exhibiting herself in such a one, could subdue.

The carriage was a chariot, hung so high that its ascent, aided by only three steps, was an operation requiring some activity. The windows were unusually small, but to make amends for this defect, three ample lamps, of which the middle one was purely ornamental, economy precluding its use, decorated the front. The comte's arms, emblazoned on a mantle, which nearly filled the side panels, and, crowned by his coronet, shone resplendent on the ill-varnished carriage.

The coachman and footman wore pantaloons and top boots; the latter boasting a superfluity of the varnish that had been denied to the carriage.

The box, on which the coachman was perched, rather than seated, was so raised in the middle, that he was obliged to use his whip, as rope dancers do their balanciers, to preserve his equilibrium.

The horses were old, and of a deep black color; they had been bought a bargain at the sale of an undertaker, who was selling off his old stock of hearse and mourning-coach horses; and the only alteration they had sustained in their new situation was, the cutting off a portion of their tails. Old and worn down, as were the poor animals, they still retained some portion of their long practised dignity of movement. They shook their heads proudly, as in their days of funeral pomp, when nodding plumes adorned them; and persevered in their old solemn paces, no less from habit than a want of power to advance more rapidly.

The carriage once in motion, the noise it made almost deafened Cecile, and her light form was sent bounding from side to side, by the jerks of its movements; she seized the holder to support herself, and turned to Madame de la Rue, to recommend her to do the same, when a violent jolt, precipitated that lady against the side of the carriage, and sent her false teeth into the lap of Cecile.

The unhappy old woman grasped eagerly at them, but in the action, another secousse cast her chapeau at the feet of Cecile, and so deranged her wig as to leave a part of her bald head exposed, and impart to her painted face, an expression that rendered it perfectly hideous.

Cecile extended her hand to pull the checkstring, that Madame de la Rue might adjust her discomposed toilette, but that lady gave her an imploring look and tried to utter a request, which the loss of her teeth rendered inarticulate. She pulled her wig to its right position, and knelt down to collect her scattered teeth, but one of them, and that one the front tooth, was no where to be found; for, alas! it had disappeared through the window. She put on her chapeau, which she arranged by means of a pocket mirror, taken from her ridicule, and kept the recovered teeth safe in her pocket-handkerchief, while she firmly grasped a sideholder, to prevent further accidents.

Cecile could see her face reflected in the front glass, and never had she beheld anything so ridiculous. Much of the rouge

and pearl-powder that had covered it, had been taken off by their violent contact with the curls of her wig, to which they still adhered; and the expression of mingled sorrow, anger, and humiliation in her countenance, offered so strange a contrast to the comical derangement of her dress, that Cecile found it difficult to repress the smile that rose to her lips, as she glanced at her.

The vanity of Madame de la Rue led her to endeavor to explain to Cecile, that it was *not age* that had rendered it necessary for her to have recourse to false teeth and a wig; and, as she tried to express, that a fall from her horse, some *short* time before, deprived her of the finest teeth in France, and a fever, in consequence of it, occasioned the loss of her superb chevelure, the indistinct pronunciation, caused by the absence of her supplementary teeth, joined to her woeful countenance, rendered her irresistibly ludicrous.

The Duchesse de Montcalm was ready to take charge of Cecile, who entered the well appointed carriage, behind which mounted two footmen, whose splendid livery and respectable appearance would not have disgraced any aristocratic equipage in London.

The first visit was to Mademoiselle de la Tours, where canezous of crêpe were commanded; the second was to Victorine's, where Cecile had to submit to the tiresome operation of having a dress *made* on her person, that no plait or irregularity might exist in the pattern to be taken.

Cecile almost groaned audibly, as she certainly did in spirit, at being made to stand two whole hours, whilst this operation was going on; but the duchesse said, it was absolutely necessary; and Victorine told her, that all the ladies for whom she made dresses were compelled to undergo it.

The duchesse consulted Victorine on the best mode of concealing certain exuberances of embonpoint in her own person, which injured her figure; and various modes were suggested, which astonished the inexperienced girl, who knew not before, that solid flesh can be transferred from one part of a person to another, without surgical assistance; but what cannot vanity accomplish, when its votaries are bent on obeying its dictates?

From Victorine's they drove to Herbault's, where Cecile heard the duchesse request the man-milliner to study the physiognomy of mademoiselle, and to make her a chapeau to accord with it.

She felt her cheeks glow as Monsieur Herbault crossed his arms, placed himself in front of her, and fixing his eyes on her face, seemed to reflect profoundly for five minutes; at the expiration of that time, he turned to the duchesse, and declared, that he had now possessed himself of the physiognomy of mademoiselle, and would send her in three hours *un chapeau dont il repondait, irait à Merveille à sa figure.*

The duchesse now attended to her own wants; she required, as she stated to Monsieur Herbault, "*un petit bonnet bien simple, avec de la blonde legère et des rubans de gaze rose bien pâle, pour porter quand elle serait souffrante.*"

Cecile heard with astonishment a person in perfect health ordering a becoming cap for illness; but she had yet much to learn in the school she was entering. *A turban a la Juive*, and *un chapeau un peu coquet*, were next commanded, with innumerable recommendations to Monsieur Herbault to attend to them particularly himself, as she (the duchesse) had not been quite satisfied of late with the head dresses sent, which were not so becoming to her as those furnished some years before.

Cecile observed the incipient smile that played over the lips of the man-milliner at the naïveté of the last observation, and anticipated, though not quite to its impertinent extent, the reflection he uttered alone, when Madame de Montcalm's carriage drove away. "*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! que nos vieilles dames sont coquettes, la duchesse m'en veut parceque je ne puis pas, par mes chapeaux la rajeunir de vingt ans.*

The Comte de Bethune and his daughter were engaged to dine at the Hotel de Montcalm, and the duchesse left Cecile at the door of the Hotel de Bethune, desiring her to be punctual at six, as she intended taking her to the opera.

Her father met Cecile in the ante-chamber, and she having told him of the duchesse's plans for the evening, intreated that she might be excused from going to the opera, as it would be most painful to her feelings to appear at any public place of amusement so recently after the death of her dear Lady Ayrshire. Tears filled the eyes of the affectionate girl as she made this request; but neither the tears, nor the intreaty, produced any effect on the mind of her father, who coldly told her, that as Lady Ayrshire had only been the first cousin of her mother, and consequently, was only *her* second cousin, "*les convenances*,"—his favorite phrase,—could not be violated by her appearance in pub-

then been in a vain delusion all the previous portion of her life?—had all the commendations bestowed on her proceeded from flattery? These were the questions she asked herself; for Cecile had yet to learn that what is considered graceful and dignified in rational England, passes for gaucherie and stiffness, in frivolous France. She blamed herself for not preserving her self-possession, as her sense of good-breeding told her that all the désagremens she had encountered proceeded from the obtuse brusquerie of the duchesse, which she ought to have met with dignified coldness. But, at nineteen, it is difficult to be dignified with those who have prejudged us to be unformed and awkward, and any assumption of dignity on the part of Cecile, would have been totally lost on the persons with whom she was now associated, or mistaken for *mauvais humeur*.

*Maniere* and *esprit*, are the two objects which all French women aim at acquiring. The first, according to their notions, consists in an air degagé, that is to say, a perfect freedom from timidity in their demeanor and movements, and an aplomb in all situations, and under every circumstance in which they may happen to be placed. They must be enabled to enact the role of each character they wish to personify; for a French woman is always acting, her life is a comedy or tragedy, as events occur; but, whichever it may be, it finds her prepared for her part. It is not that they cannot, and do not feel as others do, but it is that from infancy, they are taught to refer their actions and conversation to the effect to be produced by both on others; the *qu'en dira-t-on*, is always present to their minds, and to be cited as bearing affliction gracefully, and prosperity with bon ton, is as essential in their eyes to be appropriately dressed for either role, and much more important than the real causes or effects of them. A French woman is not content with being a good wife and mother—and there are hundreds in every class who are both—but she must dramatise the part, to produce a scenic effect. The more homely virtue and the happiness it never fails to produce, is not sufficient—she must be applauded—hence she is always an actress. Her salon is the theatre where she plays her principal part, and that it may be brilliantly performed, *esprit* is absolutely necessary. All her study is to acquire and display this French essential; for this she dips into metaphysics, skims the froth of political economy, runs over every new production, and what is more difficult, occasionally listens to the *membres de la Chambre des Paris et des Deputés*, and the *savans* who frequent her soirées. She repays herself for this last mentioned sacrifice by giving her opinions with equal self-confidence on the most knotty point of politics, or abstruse science, as on the last new mode; and has at command a certain jargon and tone of persiflage, half-laughing, half-serious, which passes current for wit, and gains for her the flattering distinction of being quoted as having *beaucoup d'esprit*. Every Frenchwoman is *mannièrée;* even while a child in the nursery, and when arrived at maturity, it has become so natural to her that it cannot be left off. All who possess not this distinction, are considered *gauche* and *mal elevé:* it was, therefore, no wonder that Cecile in the circle of the Duchesse de Montcalm, was treated as a young person totally unformed.

We once heard a French lady give the preference to an artificial rose made by Natier, (the fashionable artificial flower maker at Paris,) to a natural one of great beauty, plucked in a parterre. She asserted that there was no comparison; the rose of Natier was much more elegant, the petals more delicate, and *la couleur plus tendre;* "*enfin*," as she added," it is more like my beau ideal of a rose than the one from the garden." This French lady's estimation of the artificial rose, may serve as an example of the opinion of all her sex in France, as to natural and acquired grace, beauty, and manner; and the well-bred English woman, who will not fly to *faire l' esprit et briller dans les salons*, will be sure to be counted as stupid, awkward, and ennuieuse.

This innate love of display, and invariable system of acting, of which we accuse French women, is, however, accompanied by so many good qualities, that we should be wanting in justice were we not to acknowledge them. Good temper, good nature, and a wish of obliging, are peculiar characteristics in them, and no country can boast more affectionate wives, mothers, sisters, and friends, than can France; though, unfortunately, the *exhibition* of each character is too much considered.

The visitors at the Duchesse de Montcalm's soirées were increased, if not enlivened, by the presence of some of the members of the Chambre de Pairs, with a sprinkling of *savans*, and a few young men of family. No name was to be heard pro-

nounced in her salons, that did not belong to l'ancien régime, and noble birth, and ultra politics, were the only requisites for obtaining a favorable reception in them. On the noblesse of the imperial dynasty she looked with contempt, if not horror; she blamed *la famille royale*, for having tolerated them; and never spoke of Napoleon, but as a *charlatan* set up by the *canaille*, to bring legitimate royalty into disrepute. She had a thousand *jeu d' esprits* to repeat on this subject, which were sure to be applauded by the *habitués* of her salons, who had continued to applaud them ever since the restoration. On one occasion, when descanting on the glories of Henri Quatre, a person present having ventured to observe that Henri Quatre was *le Roi de la Canaille*, she made her reputation as a bel esprit, by answering, that Napoleon was *le canaille des Rois*. By such bon mots, a person may sometimes make a reputation in France, on which he may live for years, provided the speaker is a person of some fashion.

The young men presented a strange melange of frivolity and pedantry, the latter, like the English costume they had adopted, often rendered ridiculous by the habits induced by the former; for the grave English dress in which a French elegant envelops his person, looks not more *outré*, contrasted with the vivacious movements of the young Parisian who sports it, than does the pretending pedantry they affect, when contrasted with the natural gaiety and frivolity of their characters, which break forth continually.

Cecile drew comparisons between the young men now around, and those she had been accustomed to meet in England. The cold politeness, yet respectful civilities of the English, were much more to her taste than the exaggerated compliments and obtrusive attentions of the French; and her thoughts often recurred to Desbrow while impressed by the forcible contrasts offered to him in the persons of the petits maitres who surrounded her.

Previous to their leaving the Duchesse de Montcalm's, that lady beckoned the Comte de Bethune to her, and they conversed in a low voice for a few minutes. Cecile apprehended some new subject of annoyance, nor was she disappointed when her father, during their drive home, acquainted her that la duchesse had the goodness to give up Madame de la Rue, one of her dames de compagnie, to act as chaperon to Cecile until she was married; as *les convenances* exacted that a young lady, even though under a father's roof, required the sanction of a female chaperon.

Cecile heard this in silence, because she had observed her father's character sufficiently to be aware that any representations to induce him to change any plan connected with his ideas of *les convenances*, would be not only unavailing, but ill-received; yet, a sigh escaped her, when she reflected that this last disagreement would destroy the consolation she hoped to enjoy in pursuing in solitude her accustomed avocations; and she looked back with renewed regret to the happy hours passed in dear England and Scotland, in the privacy of her chamber, left free to follow her various occupations whenever she wished to be alone.

The porter, attired in his night habiliments, loudly yawned while he opened the ponderous porte cocher to admit them; and Baptiste, awaked by the loud ringing of the bell, ran forward with eyes only half open, and a lamp half-extinguished, sending forth a most offensive effluvia, to receive them in the vestibule, and lighted them to the anti-chamber, where the mingled odor of the tobacco and garlick with which he had been regaling himself, nearly overpowered the olfactory nerves of poor Cecile.

The Comte de Bethune conducted his daughter to her chamber, and having touched her forehead with his lips, wished her good night at the door; but no sooner had Cecile entered the room,—whose cold and dreary aspect, seen by the faint light of the solitary wax-candle in her hand, struck her as being even still more cheerless, when contrasted with the brilliant salons in which she had passed the evening,—than alarmed by some noise in the chamber, she turned to the quarter whence she thought it proceeded; at the same instant the candlestick was struck from her grasp, and she was left in total darkness.

In the first moment of terror, a cry escaped her; but in the next, her impulse was to regain the door, and she was proceeding in what she imagined to be its direction, when something struck against her cheek, and in the same moment she fell over a tabouret that impeded her passage. She called aloud for assistance, and was relieved by seeing Madame le Moine enter, who immediately explained the cause of her alarm, by venting sundry maledictions on *les chauve-souris*, who were flitting through the murky atmosphere of the gloomy apartment, and who during the day concealed themselves in the draperies.

"*Mais que voulez vous, mademoiselle,*" exclaimed she, "they have been so long the undisputed tenants of our hotel, that they think they may remain unmolested. It was very stupid of me not to have prepared you for these nocturnal visitants."

While she was speaking, innumerable bats continued flying about the room, to the terror of poor Cecile, who had never before come in contact with any thing so disgusting, and having expressed her alarm, Madame le Moine tried to re-assure her, by declaring they would do her no harm.

"I have hundreds of them in my room," said she, "and though they frequently fly against me, and tap my cheeks when I sleep, still they do not bite, as I dare be sworn those in England do; but there, *chaque bête est mechante*, while here, they are only lively."

The prejudice of the garrulous French woman extorted a smile from Cecile; but still her accounts of the docility of Parisian bats, reconciled not her young mistress to the idea of having her cheeks tapped by them when she slept.

"Oh! if that alarms you," said Madame le Moine, "I have only to draw the damask curtains of your bed closely, and pin them round, and then I defy any bat to approach you."

Cecile carefully examined the interior of the bed, and having ascertained that it had no inhabitant, she adopted Madame le Moine's plan, and then told her she might depart.

"*Comment donc, mademoiselle,*" said the old woman; "am I not to have the honor of undressing you? I sat up purposely to offer my services."

Cecile told her, that she never required any aid at night; and the old woman looking at her for a few moments, with astonishment painted in her countenance, shrugged her shoulders, turned up her eyes, and then exclaimed: "*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!* the English are the strangest race on earth! Not want any assistance at night! the moment that a French lady likes the most to chat with her femme de chambre, and hear all that is going on in the hotel or the faubourg. Well, well, *chacun à son goût;* but, if before the revolution, any one had told me that a descendant of this ancient house could go to bed without her femme de chambre, I would have pronounced it to be a calumny."

All this was said sotto voce, but loud enough to be heard by Cecile, who could not refrain from smiling at observing how much this rejection of her attendance had caused her to sink in the estimation of Madame le Moine.

"Mademoiselle will pardon me," said the old woman, "if I suggest that now mademoiselle is returned to her own country, it would be more consistent with *les convenances*, that she should adopt *la mise Française*. Those long tire bouchon curls look terrible, and mademoiselle's robe quite disfigures her; I have purchased le *petit Courier des Dames* for the last week, in order that mademoiselle may see how a French lady ought to look; *le voila*," (taking it up from the table,) "see *ma chere demoiselle*, how graceful, how noble, what small waists, what fulness in the jupe! I am sure there must be fifteen yards of silk to make that robe, and the one mademoiselle wears looks not to have above ten or eleven. It is dreadful, quite dreadful, to see a young lady of French birth so disfigured! Had you been English, I should have said nothing, for no one expects them to dress or look like other people."

"Here again," thought Cecile, "is a lesson on the toilette, and *les convenances;* the two points which seem to occupy all a French woman's attention, in whatever class of life, she may find herself placed; for the tirade of Madame le Duchesse de Montcalm differs in little more from the more homely dissertation of Madame le Moine—the feeling and prejudice that dictated both are the same. Oh! would I were in dear happy England, where dress does not form the principal subject of conversation, and where people are content to attend to propriety, without putting forward their pretensions to it on every trifling occasion."

The wind shook the heavy casements of the windows, and whistled through the ill-jointed door-frames, and the owl screamed, joining its discordant notes to the howling of the blast, as Cecile counted the weary hours while sleep closed not her eyes. The flickering light of her night-lamp served only to show the dreary loneliness of the vast chamber, and she could have fancied herself the heroine of some tale of romance, shut up in a deserted chateau, had not her mind been formed of too stern stuff to give way to such idle imaginings. At length slumber weighed down her lids; and she awoke not until Madame le Moine came to announce that Monsieur le Comte was dressing.

Cecile hurried through the duties of her toilette, that her father might not be kept waiting, Madame le Moine officiously as-

sisting, and observing, as each fresh article of dress was drawn forth, "Oh! mademoiselle, what an outré canezou! it has been out of fashion in Paris for more than six weeks;" or, "what an ugly robe, or ill made shoes!"

When she met her father at the breakfast table, he told her that he had ordered the carriage to take her to the Duchesse de Montcalm's, and placing a little spangled purse in her hand, he begged she might not be sparing of its contents, as it was absolutely necessary that her whole toilette should be remodelled.

Cecile thanked him, and was on the point of explaining that she stood not in need of pecuniary assistance, as Lord Ayrshire had liberally provided for all possible wants, real or imaginary; but, a moment's reflection told her that, with her father's extreme susceptibility and pride, he might take offence at Lord Ayrshire's generosity, and therefore she remained silent.

When breakfast was concluded, Madame de la Rue was announced, and Cecile could with difficulty repress the smile that rose to her lips as she fixed her eyes on her future chaperon.

Madame de la Rue was a lady of a certain, or rather uncertain age; for, whether she was fifty-five, or ten years more, it would be impossible for the most perfect judge to ascertain, thanks to the quantity of pearl-powder, rouge, and false curls, with which she had covered herself. The chinks and wrinkles, that time had traced in her visage, were filled up by a coat of white and red, so thickly laid on, that it made her countenance resemble more the face of a clown in a pantomime, than any attempt at copying nature. Her eyebrows presented a straight, heavy line of black, giving a fierceness to the twinkling gray eyes, over which they protruded, and her crépé curls, of raven hue, rose in spiral form, over a brow, offering a surface like a pumice-stone. Her wide mouth, each time it opened, seemed to endeavor to reach her ears, and the tremulous motion of the false teeth that filled it, gave the idea of a wooden representation of a witch, acted on by wires, such as are seen in toy-shops. Her figure was tall and lanky; her dress la derniere mode; and her air offered a strange mixture of playful vivacity, dignified humility, and conscious superiority.

She tottered into the room, with that indescribable movement of helplessness and coquetry, that peculiarly belongs to Parisians, demanded milles pardons, no one could tell for what, and declared that Monsieur le Comte, and Mademoiselle de Bethune, were *mille fois trop bonne*, merely because the first offered her a chair, and the second received her with politeness.

Madame was in a perpetual flutter; at one moment pinching her dry lips, at the evident risk of losing her false teeth, and at the next, arranging her curls, or her dress, smiling all the time with all her might, and by turns looking, as she thought, insinuating, vivacious, or sentimental, as best suited the turn of the comte's remarks.

She stated that she had taken the liberty of bringing with her two favorites, from whom she could not bear to be separated—her little dog, Bijou, and her parrot, Coco; both, she added, shared her couch; and here she affected to blush, and throw down her eyes—and were so attached to her, that she should be guilty of ingratitude—a vice unknown to *les cœurs Français bien nés*—did she not feel passionately attached to them. Were she asked, as was the Roman Cornelia, to show her jewels, she would show her Bijou and Coco, as the Roman matron showed her children—and here, the false teeth were displayed even to their gold fastenings, by the grin with which Madame de la Rue applauded her own attempt at a classical allusion.

The carriage being announced, the comte requested Madame de la Rue, to conduct Cecile to the Duchesse de Montcalm's, to commence the arduous operation of shopping; and having again and again requested his daughter to leave the choice of her purchases entirely to the duchesse, he handed her to the peristyle.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

"Les reflexions que le malheur excite ne sont point sans avantage pour un jeune homme; car cela l'habitue à penser; et l'homme qui ne pense pas n'est jamais rien."

Lord Heatherfield, finding the servant of Lord Walmer confined to his bed, by the injuries he had sustained the night before, took on himself the task of apprising his lordship's agent, whose address the valet had given him, of the melancholy catastrophe that had taken place, and ordered every mark of respect to be paid to the remains of the unfortunate nobleman.

He was on the point of leaving the inn, when Sir Harry Villebois arrived, and his

feelings may be more easily imagined than described, when that gentleman, on hearing every particular of the dreadful accident of the night before, and the charitable part of Lord Heatherfield had taken in it, informed him that Lord Walmer was on his route to challenge him to fight a duel, and that he, Sir Harry, was to join the deceased at ———, two stages nearer to Heatherfield Park, to be his friend, and the bearer of the challenge.

Sir Harry explained that, after Lord Walmer commenced proceedings against Lord Heatherfield, he discovered that he had not evidence sufficient to procure a divorce; this enraged him, and some statement in the papers having increased his angry feelings, he determined to call Lord Heatherfield out, and repeatedly declared that the affair should only terminate with the existence of one of the parties. It was the man whose life he was about to seek, that had vainly tried to save his, and watched by his dying bed, with such deep regret.

The ways of Providence are inscrutable; had Lord Walmer lived a few hours longer, Heatherfield must have given him the meeting he was so bent on demanding; and though he was determined, in case of such an event, to receive Lord Walmer's fire, but not to return it, still, his own life might, nay, most probably would, have been the sacrifice, and he would have been sent out of the world with all his sins on his head.

Lord Heatherfield was a brave man, physically, and morally brave, but he was a Christian, and as such, could not contemplate a sudden death, without feelings of awe; hence, he reflected deeply on the results that had followed, and might still follow, his liaison with Lady Walmer, and his dislike towards her consequently increased.

The marriage settlement of Lady Walmer secured her a jointure of five thousand a-year; and she was now freed from the fear and scandal of an action of damages and a divorce. The house in London was also hers, for her life, so that she would find herself in affluent circumstances, and delivered from all restraint, which, to her daring spirit, and capricious mind, was ample consolation for the death of the husband she had wronged.

To join her now, Heatherfield felt, would be as indelicate as indecorous; he wrote to her again, stating his intention of retiring to an estate of his, in Wales, where he should remain for some months, and where her letters would find him. He also wrote a long letter to Desbrow inviting him, if he wished to perform an act of charity, to come to him in Wales; and having taken a cordial farewell of Sir Harry Villebois, whose frankness and goodnature had won his favorable opinion, he set out on his journey.

Impressed as he was with the melancholy scene of death which he had left, and which cast a deep feeling of sadness over his mind, still a weight was taken from his heart, as he reflected that he was now freed, for some months at least, from going to France, and meeting Lady Walmer. He hardly dared to indulge himself in the vague hopes, which often suggested themselves, that he might never see her again; for his vanity led him to believe that she loved him too well, not to persevere in urging him to become her husband, when the period prescribed by etiquette, had elapsed. Had any of Heatherfield's friends been placed in *his* situation, his hopes of their release, through the inconstancy of the lady, would have been very sanguine, but, even though a man judges unfavorably of a woman, whom he believes attached to him, such is his vanity, that he is always prone to believe the passion *he* inspires, is more likely to be durable than that inspired by others.

The second day of Heatherfield's journey, he arrived, late at night, at Capel Carrig, and was told the inn was so crowded, that he must be content with an inferior bedroom. He sought it soon after, and was requested by the courtesying chamber-maid, to make as little noise as possible, as a lady, who was not quite well, slept in the next room, which was only divided from his, by a wooden partition.

Lord Heatherfield carefully obeyed the injunctions given to him, and being fatigued, soon fell asleep. He was awaked, at an early hour, by the movement in the next chamber, and, in a few minutes, he became all attention, when a low, sweet voice, every intonation of which had been treasured in his memory, stole on his greedy ear.

"How have you slept, my dear child?" inquired a female, in tones which he instantly recognised to be Lady Vavasour's.

"Better, much better, dear mother," replied Emily, for it was she who had occupied the room next his.

"Has that cruel pain in the side again tormented you, my love?" asked the anxious parent.

"Much less, dearest mother; and I feel infinitely better to-day."

"God be thanked!" God be thanked!" murmured Lady de Vavasour; "I must take the good tidings to your father;" and so saying, she left the room.

Heatherfield felt overpowered with emotion; that dear, sweet voice, which had never addressed him but with affection, thrilled to his very heart. His Emily—ah! no longer his—but still loved—adored—she had been ill—was still suffering!—was *he*, could *he* be the cause? A pleasure, mingled with sadness, followed this thought; but alarm for an object so tenderly loved, made him tremble, as he again and again recurred to the cruel pain in the side referred to by Lady de Vavasour.

He listened with breathless attention to every movement in the next room, and her toilette being completed, he heard Emily dismiss her femme de chambre, with instructions to return in half an hour. He rose from his bed with noiseless step, and, his room being still darkened, he perceived the light coming in from some chinks in the aperture of the ill-jointed boards of the partition, which, in distending, had broken sundry small cracks in the paper which covered it.

To one of these small slits he applied his eye, and beheld Emily kneeling on a chair, offering up her morning prayer. She was much thinner and paler, than when he had last seen her, but she had never appeared so lovely to him as at this moment. The look of deep devotion in her dove-like eyes, the pure and angelic expression of her beautiful countenance, had something in them that affected Heatherfield even to tears. He could distinguish each word of her prayer, so distinctly did her clear, and sweetly modulated voice pronounce it; but his feelings may be judged, when he heard his own name murmured in faint accents, as she beseeched the Almighty to pardon his errors, to guide him through the mazy path of life, and to bless him, here, and hereafter.

There was a solemnity such as he had never previously experienced in the whole tone of Heatherfield's feelings, while he listened to this touching display of her purity and piety, this tender union of earthly affections and heavenly aspirations. He could have prostrated himself before this angelic girl, not to profess the passion which he had never ceased to entertain for her, but the reverence, the gratitude, she excited in his own soul, and his deep sense of his own unworthiness to approach her.

When Emily rose from her knees, a heavenly calm was impressed on her face a faint blush tinged her fair cheeks, and the inspired pencil of Raphael never portrayed a more seraphic countenance than hers as Heatherfield now gazed on it. Her mother just then entered the room, and led her daughter from it, gently supporting her and drawing a wrapping shawl over her form, attentions which Emily repaid by looks of love, that Heatherfield would have given worlds to receive and merit.

The window of this room, looked into the court-yard of the inn, where he saw the travelling coach of Lord Vavasour, drawn near the door, and the servants arranging the luggage. He hastily dressed himself, and took his station at the window, whence he soon beheld Emily led to the coach between her father and mother; but as she was about to enter it, his own carriage was drawn up, and his servant stood uncovered before it, lowly bowing.

Emily started, and uttered a faint exclamation, as she recognised the arms on the carriage, and the servant; but after a moment's pause, she recovered her self-possession, and was assisted into the coach by her father, and the party being seated, the carriage drove rapidly on, the servants on the box behind, exchanging salutations with Heatherfield's servant, who looked after them with a wistful air, as if he regretted that they were going different routes.

This unexpected rencontre had renewed, with fresh force, the attachment of Emily's lover for her. He now felt the utter impossibility of ever becoming the husband of another, even though all hope of aspiring to be hers was over. Well did he know the rigidity of Lady Vavasour's religious and moral opinions, and the influence they must exercise over her husband and daughter. Could he expect, even were he free from all claims which Lady Walmer might assert, that Lady Vavasour would grant the hand of her pure and innocent child, to a man who stood branded before the world as a seducer and an adulterer? No! he felt there was no hope of such happiness for him; but still, a life of singleness, the power of leading a solitary existence, was comparative happiness, to becoming the companion of one woman, while his whole soul was devoted to another.

The more he reflected on Emily's charms, the less could he contemplate any future alliance with Lady Walmer. Emily, on her knees, praying for him, was continually present to his imagination. He

had seen her in scenes of gaiety and splendor, with all the adornment that dress could bestow, where her beauty attracted the admiration of all, but never had she beamed on his eyes with such irresistible charms, as when pale and suffering, in a simple travelling dress, and in the paltry room of an inn, he marked the pure and holy expression of her angelic face, as she offered up her prayers to the Almighty. She seemed, indeed, an angel, who exiled from her natural sphere, was praying to be restored to it; and her presence shed a sanctity over the chamber she occupied, that made Heatherfield, when he entered it, (which he did the moment after the carriage, that contained her, had driven away,) feel as if he was in a temple dedicated to the Deity. He reverentially pressed to his lips the cushion on which she had knelt, and the pillow on which her head had reposed, and he was overjoyed at finding on the table, the bouquet, she had worn the preceding day, and of which he possessed himself, as a treasure never to be parted with. He placed the faded flowers, wrapped carefully in a paper, near his heart, and blessed the chance that had again given Emily to his sight, and proved to him that he was still remembered by her with interest.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

"When I see age moving through scenes of gaiety and pleasure, its wrinkles concealed beneath a mask of paint, and its wig wreathed with flowers, I am reminded of the deaths' heads which the ancients introduced at their festivals, to recal to their memories the brevity of life, and make them enjoy with more zest the present."

When Cecile reached the vestibule, attended by Madame de la Rue, her father's equipage attracted her wonder, and provoked a smile, which not even the annoyance of exhibiting herself in such a one, could subdue.

The carriage was a chariot, hung so high that its ascent, aided by only three steps, was an operation requiring some activity. The windows were unusually small, but to make amends for this defect, three ample lamps, of which the middle one was purely ornamental, economy precluding its use, decorated the front. The comte's arms, emblazoned on a mantle, which nearly filled the side panels, and, crowned by his coronet, shone resplendent on the ill-varnished carriage.

The coachman and footman wore pantaloons and top boots; the latter boasting a superfluity of the varnish that had been denied to the carriage.

The box, on which the coachman was perched, rather than seated, was so raised in the middle, that he was obliged to use his whip, as rope dancers do their balanciers, to preserve his equilibrium.

The horses were old, and of a deep black color; they had been bought a bargain at the sale of an undertaker, who was selling off his old stock of hearse and mourning-coach horses; and the only alteration they had sustained in their new situation was, the cutting off a portion of their tails. Old and worn down, as were the poor animals, they still retained some portion of their long practised dignity of movement. They shook their heads proudly, as in their days of funeral pomp, when nodding plumes adorned them; and persevered in their old solemn paces, no less from habit than a want of power to advance more rapidly.

The carriage once in motion, the noise it made almost deafened Cecile. and her light form was sent bounding from side to side, by the jerks of its movements; she seized the holder to support herself, and turned to Madame de la Rue, to recommend her to do the same, when a violent jolt, precipitated that lady against the side of the carriage, and sent her false teeth into the lap of Cecile.

The unhappy old woman grasped eagerly at them, but in the action, another secousse cast her chapeau at the feet of Cecile, and so deranged her wig as to leave a part of her bald head exposed, and impart to her painted face, an expression that rendered it perfectly hideous.

Cecile extended her hand to pull the checkstring, that Madame de la Rue might adjust her discomposed toilette, but that lady gave her an imploring look and tried to utter a request, which the loss of her teeth rendered inarticulate. She pulled her wig to its right position, and knelt down to collect her scattered teeth, but one of them, and that one the front tooth, was no where to be found; for, alas! it had disappeared through the window. She put on her chapeau, which she arranged by means of a pocket mirror, taken from her ridicule, and kept the recovered teeth safe in her pocket-handkerchief, while she firmly grasped a sideholder, to prevent further accidents.

Cecile could see her face reflected in the front glass, and never had she beheld anything so ridiculous. Much of the rouge

and pearl-powder that had covered it, had been taken off by their violent contact with the curls of her wig, to which they still adhered; and the expression of mingled sorrow, anger, and humiliation in her countenance, offered so strange a contrast to the comical derangement of her dress, that Cecile found it difficult to repress the smile that rose to her lips, as she glanced at her.

The vanity of Madame de la Rue led her to endeavor to explain to Cecile, that it was *not age* that had rendered it necessary for her to have recourse to false teeth and a wig; and, as she tried to express, that a fall from her horse, some *short* time before, deprived her of the finest teeth in France, and a fever, in consequence of it, occasioned the loss of her superb chevelure, the indistinct pronunciation, caused by the absence of her supplementary teeth, joined to her woeful countenance, rendered her irresistibly ludicrous.

The Duchesse de Montcalm was ready to take charge of Cecile, who entered the well appointed carriage, behind which mounted two footmen, whose splendid livery and respectable appearance would not have disgraced any aristocratic equipage in London.

The first visit was to Mademoiselle de la Tours, where canezous of crêpe were commanded; the second was to Victorine's, where Cecile had to submit to the tiresome operation of having a dress *made* on her person, that no plait or irregularity might exist in the pattern to be taken.

Cecile almost groaned audibly, as she certainly did in spirit, at being made to stand two whole hours, whilst this operation was going on; but the duchesse said, it was absolutely necessary; and Victorine told her, that all the ladies for whom she made dresses were compelled to undergo it.

The duchesse consulted Victorine on the best mode of concealing certain exuberances of embonpoint in her own person, which injured her figure; and various modes were suggested, which astonished the inexperienced girl, who knew not before, that solid flesh can be transferred from one part of a person to another, without surgical assistance; but what cannot vanity accomplish, when its votaries are bent on obeying its dictates?

From Victorine's they drove to Herbault's, where Cecile heard the duchesse request the man-milliner to study the physiognomy of mademoiselle, and to make her a chapeau to accord with it.

She felt her cheeks glow as Monsieur Herbault crossed his arms, placed himself in front of her, and fixing his eyes on her face, seemed to reflect profoundly for five minutes; at the expiration of that time, he turned to the duchesse, and declared, that he had now possessed himself of the physiognomy of mademoiselle, and would send her in three hours *un chapeau dont il repondait, irait à Merveille à sa figure.*

The duchesse now attended to her own wants; she required, as she stated to Monsieur Herbault, "*un petit bonnet bien simple, avec de la blonde legère et des rubans de gaze rose bien pâle, pour porter quand elle serait souffrante.*"

Cecile heard with astonishment a person in perfect health ordering a becoming cap for illness; but she had yet much to learn in the school she was entering. *A turban a la Juive*, and *un chapeau un peu coquet*, were next commanded, with innumerable recommendations to Monsieur Herbault to attend to them particularly himself, as she (the duchesse) had not been quite satisfied of late with the head dresses sent, which were not so becoming to her as those furnished some years before.

Cecile observed the incipient smile that played over the lips of the man-milliner at the naïveté of the last observation, and anticipated, though not quite to its impertinent extent, the reflection he uttered alone, when Madame de Montcalm's carriage drove away. "*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! que nos vieilles dames sont coquettes, la duchesse m'en veut parceque je ne puis pas, par mes chapeaux la rajeunir de vingt ans.*

The Comte de Bethune and his daughter were engaged to dine at the Hotel de Montcalm, and the duchesse left Cecile at the door of the Hotel de Bethune, desiring her to be punctual at six, as she intended taking her to the opera.

Her father met Cecile in the ante-chamber, and she having told him of the duchesse's plans for the evening, intreated that she might be excused from going to the opera, as it would be most painful to her feelings to appear at any public place of amusement so recently after the death of her dear Lady Ayrshire. Tears filled the eyes of the affectionate girl as she made this request; but neither the tears, nor the intreaty, produced any effect on the mind of her father, who coldly told her, that as Lady Ayrshire had only been the first cousin of her mother, and consequently, was only *her* second cousin, "*les convenances,*"—his favorite phrase,—could not be violated by her appearance in pub-

lic; had it not been strictly according to etiquette, *he*,—as he emphatically stated, —would be the last person to accede to, or Madame la Duchesse de Montcalm, to propose it.

Cecile ventured to observe that with her it was even more a matter of feeling than of etiquette; and therefore, she should feel much obliged by not being forced to go.

"*Forced!*" repeated the comte, drawing up his eyebrows and shoulders; "in France, daughters are never forced to do any thing; because they are brought up to pay *implicit* obedience to the wishes of their parents, on every subject; and, therefore, that barbarous word is exploded from their vocabulary. He felt hurt," he added, "that she should have used it; when she knew him better, she would discover how much it was misplaced; but en attendant, he desired that he might hear no more objections to any plans of amusement proposed by the Duchesse de Montcalm;" and so saying, he retired to dress for dinner.

Cecile could not suppress the tears that gushed into her eyes, at this first proof of parental authority. She had never heard a word approaching to unkindness from Lord and Lady Ayrshire, who had studied her happiness with the same affectionate delicacy that she had endeavored to anticipate their wishes. The mournful contrast in her position, and the ever to be deplored cause that led to it, made her tears flow afresh, but, recollecting that she had little time to spare, and unwilling to offend her father, by keeping him waiting. she entered her chamber to try, by bathing her eyes in rose-water, to remove the traces of her tears.

Madame le Moine soon joined her, to assist in her toilette, and the heightened color and increased trepidation of manner of the old dame, announced that something had discomposed her.

"*Eh bien! mademoiselle*,"—but we will give the substance of her conversation in English, for the advantage of our readers, —"who oould have thought that Monsieur le Comte, would have brought into the hotel an old painted coquette, more full of fancies than a monkey; who is dissatisfied with the accommodation prepared for her, and expects the old servants to wait on her, her dog, and her parrot, as if she were a duchesse, and the two latter, christians."

Cecile checked the angry verbosity of Madame le Moine, by reminding her that the comte was the best judge of the persons he wished to invite to his hotel; and that if he permitted Madame de la Rue to retain her dog and parrot, his servants had no right to resent it.

The old woman was visibly piqued at Cecile's reproof, and only added,—"Well, well, mademoiselle will soon have cause to regret her arrival in the hotel, for the *vieille folle* is a regular *Madame Touche à tout*, of whom all the establishment at the Hotel de Montcalm are heartily tired; and to get rid of whom, Madame la Duchesse has fixed her on the comte as *dame de compagnie*, as if mademoiselle had occasion for such an incumbrance. She has already tried to act *la maitresse femme* here," continued Madame le Moine, "but I have given her a few *coup de pattes*."

Cecile observed that her father would feel much offended if Madame de la Rue was insulted, and recommended Madame le Moine to treat her with civility and respect; a recommendation the old dame seemed little inclined to attend to.

Frederic, the coiffeur, had been ordered by the duchesse to be in readiness to dress Cecile's hair, and was announced just as she had completed her own simple, but becoming coiffure. She submitted her beautiful tresses to his hands, and when he had tortured them for nearly an hour, he told her, with a low bow, that at present the was toute autre chose; that her head was charmante and ravissante, and that he felt certain Madame la Duchesse would be enchanted with his performance.

When he had left the room, Cecile approached the glass, and absolutely started back with surprise at the image it presented to her. The long silken ringlets, that were wont to play over her fair cheeks, were now frizzed into crêpé curles, an operation that had robbed them of their usual lustre. Her whole physiognomy was changed, and as she considered, so much for the worse, that she smiled at the total metamorphosis in her appearance, and thought that she could hardly be recognised by her English friends if they saw her.

Madame le Moine was loud in her commendations; mademoiselle had no longer that English air, which had struck all the world, as she stated, and was now much more like *Madame la Comtesse sa grand-mere*, than before; an observation which drew a smile from Cecile, though little disposed to gaiety at the moment. She felt almost ashamed to present herself, with her new coiffure, but being summoned

by her father, she hurried to join him, and was in some measure reassured, when he told her that, *grace à Monsieur Frederic*, she now looked much more presentable, and might pass for a French woman.

Though the crepé of Monsieur Frederic, was somewhat discomposed by the rough movement of the Comte de Bethune's carriage, Cecile received the commendations of the Duchesse de Montcalm, on entering the salon, as that lady exclaimed, "*A la bonheur ma chère, à present, vous êtes vraiment bien, parceque vous êtes comme tout le monde,—je suis charmé de vous voir si bien coiffe!*"

The dinner was recherché, and passed off, as most dinners do, where five persons out of the six at table, are more intent on the good things that go *into* the mouth, than the good things that come *out* of it. The Comte de Bethune ate and praised alternately, not without referring, more than once, to *la mauvaise cuisine*, in England, declaring that he had not tasted an omelette that was eatable, all the time he was away, and that as to the venison, of which the English were so fond he thought it abominable. The rest of the society, though they had not been in England, agreed with him, that, *hors de la France*, a good dinner could not be had; an opinion in which Cecile was far from joining.

The opera was "Romeo e Guilietta," and Cecile, in its fine music, soon became so absorbed, as to forget the present. The duchesse talked politics incessantly, with an ambassador who came into her box; and whatever her remarks on political economy and foreign politics might want in profundity, they amply made up for in passion and prejudice.

Cecile would have given much to have had the power of enjoying the opera without interruption, but the duchesse and her diplomatic friend, seemed to forget she was one of the party. Who has not felt the power of music, in awakening associations, and bringing back other scenes to the mind, with a vividness that makes one forget the present in the past?

It was only a few months before, that, seated by her dear lost friend, Lady Ayrshire, in her box at the opera in London, she had listened to the same sounds, and from the same admirable voice. Lady Ayrshire, who loved music quite as much as did her elève, listened to it with the same attention; and they only expressed their admiration of the parts that most pleased them, by an interchange of looks. How did every note bring back those blissful moments! Cecile was no longer surrounded by uncongenial minds; she was at least in spirit, with that dear and lost friend, who had given and shared all the happiness of her life; and when Pasta sang "Ombra Adorata," tears gushed from her eyes, and not all the efforts she could make, could suppress the sobs that accompanied them.

The duchesse looked at her with a glance, in which wonder and contempt strove for mastery. The ambassador half smiled, as he whispered to the duchesse that, "*Apparemment, mademoiselle est bien nouvellement arrivé à Paris?*" To which she answered in a low voice, "*C'est l'esprit romanesque des Anglaises;*" then turning to Cecile, she took her arm, and led her into the back of the box, requesting her "not to make a scene, as sentimentality was quite exploded at present, and that any display of it was considered *mauvais goût*."

Cecile's pride came to her aid, she felt offended at being treated as a young miss, who was acting the sentimental, and the duchess's total want of feeling did more towards stopping her tears, than kindness or sympathy could at that moment have accomplished.

There was something of haughtiness in the air of Cecile as she dried her eyes, that repelled the continuation of the duchesse's remarks on her sensibility: though it saved her not from a lecture, on the necessity of governing every thing approaching to a display of her feelings, as they returned tête-à-tête from the opera.

"I do not prohibit you from feeling, *ma chère*," said that lady, "because that regards only yourself, and society has nothing to do with it; but the display is *autre chose*, that must be a nuisance to others, and will expose you to ridicule, so I advise you to abandon it."

## CHAPTER XXV.

"Duels are a happy invention of civilisation, which enable a man who has injured another to shoot him also, and gives him, who has for years forfeited his honor, the power of fighting, to prove that, though he possesses not the substance, he adheres to the shadow."

Lady Walmer permitted not Heatherfield to remain long free from her painful reminiscences of their position. A letter from her, soon broke in on his solitude in

Wales, and achieved the disgust which had been growing towards her, ever since the fatal scene at Lord Vavasour's.

She reminded him that, if her husband's death might be attributed to him, which, however, she was not disposed to admit, adding, more logically than feelingly on the subject, that, "Lord Walmer's fatal accident having been occasioned by the overturning of his carriage, could have nothing to do with their previous conduct, the driver of the stage-coach, or his postillion being the sole cause; still *he* (Lord Heatherfield) having sought and won her affections and consequently, led to her seeking the interview which brought about the separation from her husband, he was bound to devote his life to *her*, whom he had deprived of her natural protector. For her part," she added, "she could see no reason for postponing their marriage for longer than a month, and she had now additional motives for desiring its completion, as letters had been forwarded to her from her brother, who might be daily expected from Malta, where he had been with his regiment, and she dared not encounter him in any other character, than as the wife of the man who had injured her reputation."

The letter dropped from the hand of Heatherfield; he turned with loathing from its selfish and indelicate writer, and groaned aloud; while he asked himself if this was the woman he had once fancied he loved!

It was many days ere he could write to Lady Walmer, and when he did, his letter was so cold, and brief, that it alarmed her more than ever, as to his fulfilment of her expectations. Her next letter announced her departure for Paris, where she intended remaining in privacy, until he joined her, for on his doing so, she still seemed to count with certainty, and failed not to remind him, that he had pledged himself to this point.

Desbrow was anxious to go to Heatherfield, but knew not how to leave Lord Ayrshire, who, ever since Cecile's departure, seemed to look to him alone for consolation. That excellent nobleman's health had been gradually declining, ever since the death of his lamented wife, and Desbrow had been assured by the physicians he had consulted, that, though he might linger for some months, the blow was struck, and no hopes of his final recovery could be entertained. He wrote all this to Heatherfield, who, though desirous to see his friend, was not sorry to be left in solitude, and to be saved the remonstrances of Desbrow, whose opinions were so different from his own, on the subject on which his future destiny depended, that he dreaded hearing what might wound, but could not change his feelings.

In a few weeks, Heatherfield received an intimation from his banker, that a casket of jewels had been confided to his care, addressed to him, with a letter, which he forwarded. Heatherfield broke the seal, with a beating heart; it appeared to him, that the jewels being returned, seemed to break the last bond which united him to Emily, and he dreaded to read her father's letter. But when he had perused it, his feelings were softened, and his regret, if possible, increased.

Lord Vavasour wrote dispassionately and kindly: he stated that the codicil to the will of the late Marquis of Heatherfield, having been executed when he considered Lady Emily as the future wife of his son, it was to her in that character only that the bequest was made; consequently, the intended alliance being now at an end, the jewels could not be retained. He concluded, by an expression of good will.

Heatherfield was as much surprised as gratified by the absence of any thing like reproach in Lord Vavasour's letter, for appearances were, he was aware, so much against him, that he looked for severity rather than forbearance from Emily's father. But the fact was, that Desbrow had written an exact statement of his unfortunate friend's position to Lord Vavasour, who saw more to pity than blame in it, though the weakness of Heatherfield vexed nearly as much as it grieved him.

Week after week passed slowly away, finding Lord Heatherfield thinking only of Emily, and still less than ever disposed to seek Lady Walmer; when, one morning, before he had left his dressing-room, he was told that a stranger desired to speak to him.

His first thought, or rather dread, was, that this stranger was Lady Walmer; for all disagreeable surprises were associated in his mind with her, and he was gratified by learning that it was a *male* and not a female stranger, who wished to see him.

On descending, he found Colonel Maynard, who explained, that he waited on him as the friend of Lord Bertie, who demanded a meeting, and was waiting at an inn, at the next post, for his answer.

Colonel Maynard expressed his regret at the painful occasion of his intrusion,

but stated, that his friend, Lord Bertie, felt so keenly the unhappy scandal that had taken place, relative to his sister, Lady Walmer, that he demanded the only satisfaction Lord Heatherfield could give him; and requested him, to name a friend with whom he could fix time and place.

Heatherfield explained, that this being his first visit to Wales, there was no person in his neighborhood on whom he could call, but, that if Colonel Maynard would dispense with his having a second, whom he could not procure without sending to London, he would place his honor equally in the hands of Lord Bertie's friend, and be ready at any hour they chose to fix, for the meeting.

This proposal having been accepted, six o'clock the next morning was named, and, at Colonel Maynard's request, the valet de chambre of Lord Heatherfield was to accompany him as a witness, in case of any fatal result.

Heatherfield made his will, in which, after bequeathing a large fortune to Lady Walmer for her life, he left the whole of his family plate to Desbrow, and the jewels to Lady Emily Vavasour. This task completed, he wrote letters to Desbrow, and to Lady Walmer, to be sent in case of his death, and spent the rest of the day in reflection, and prayer to that *Almighty*, whose law he was about to violate, in exposing his life.

Duelling had often been the subject of various discussions between Heatherfield and Desbrow. The first agreed, that the system was pernicious, but wanted mental courage sufficient to oppose it in his own person: while Desbrow had often declared, that he never would fight a duel.

"But how face the world," would Heatherfield ask his friend, "with an imputation of cowardice attached to one?"

"And how face one's own conscience," would Desbrow reply, "with the crime of murder on one's head? or else, if saved that crime, the consciousness of having risked the commission of it, and of having exposed one's own life."

Between Heatherfield, who referred all his actions to the criterion of worldly opinion, and Desbrow, who referred his only to his own conscience, there was a vast difference. Heatherfield frequently found himself in situations where his natural goodness of heart placed him in violent opposition with the conventional opinions of society, and he often yielded to its impulses, though a latent fear of the world's dread laugh or frown alarmed him.

Hence he was vacillating, and infirm of purpose, and from a too great respect to prejudices, not unfrequently fell into the line of conduct most calculated to draw on him the censures he dreaded from that society, who look only at results, and invariably neglect to examine the motives.

Never had he felt the chains imposed on him by the laws of society, weigh so heavily as now, when they forced him to a hostile meeting, with a person whom he had formerly considered as a friend, and whose honor he had wounded, in the person of his sister.

Lord Bertie was of the same age as Heatherfield, they had once been thrown much together, and it was he who introduced Heatherfield to Lord and Lady Walmer; an introduction which had led to such fatal consequences.

He had been at Malta for some months with his regiment, but the heat of the climate having disagreed with him, he had returned to England, on leave of absence, to find the papers filled with the dishonor of his sister, and the death of her husband.

The elopement of Heatherfield with her, being stated in all the papers, he knew not where to seek him, until the funeral of the late Marquis of Heatherfield, and the subsequent departure of the present lord for Wales, being promulgated by the same authorities, he was furnished with a clue, of which he had taken advantage.

How often, during the course of this day, did Heatherfield shudder, reflecting on the possible results of the meeting of the next morning.

He determined not to return his adversary's fire, as he felt, that having been, though unwillingly, the cause of bringing shame on the sister, he ought not to lift his hand against the life of her brother.

Bitter were the reflections of Lord Heatherfield during this day, and he only found calmness in offering up his prayers to that God whose laws he was about to infringe. He sought, in slumber, to recover a portion of that self-possession, of which he stood so much in need. But sleep refused to visit his weary senses, while memory opened to him, the fatal register of the past; in which he traced through every page, the records of his own weakness, that had led, step by step, to the edge of the precipice on which he now found himself. A precipice whence the first step might be to—Eternity.

Emily mingled in his every thought and prayer; the bandage that had hitherto

veiled his eyes, fell off, never more to be resumed; and a bitter consciousness of his errors, now that their fatal consequences were brought before him, was impressed on his mind in ineffaceable characters.

He set out, attended by his valet de chambre, to the appointed place of meeting, and arrived there a few minutes before Lord Bertie and Colonel Maynard. The latter measured the ground, placed Heatherfield and Lord Bertie at the regular distance, and gave the signal for them to fire, as was agreed on, at the same moment. Heatherfield fired in the air, but his adversary's shot took effect, having entered his side, and he bounded from the earth, and then fell senseless to the ground.

Colonel Maynard tried to hurry Lord Bertie into the carriage, waiting for him at a few yards' distance, and in which was a surgeon, whom they had brought with them, but Lord Bertie refused to move, until Heatherfield's wound was examined, and hung over him, in breathless anxiety while the surgeon endeavored to find where the ball had lodged.

He pronounced, that though still alive, he could give no hopes of Lord Heatherfield's recovery, and urged Lord Bertie and Colonel Maynard to fly to France.

Colonel Maynard had great difficulty in persuading Lord Bertie to enter the carriage, and they drove off, deeply shocked at the result of the duel, and the more so as Heatherfield had not fired at his adversary.

The surgeon and valet de chambre placed Heatherfield in his carriage, and conveyed him still in a state of insensibility, to that mansion which he had left only an hour before, in health and strength, and into which he was now brought, with scarce a vestige of life.

All in the castle was agitation and alarm. Expresses were despatched for every surgeon of eminence within fifty miles, for his steward seemed to think, there was safety in numbers; but Mr. Keswick, the one on the spot at the duel, left not his patient for a moment, and was doing all that skill and judgment could suggest for his recovery, though with faint hopes of success.

The wound, a most dangerous one in itself, was rendered still more so by the agitation and anxiety Heatherfield had lately undergone; but the surgeons who arrived, considered that the treatment of Mr. Keswick had been so judicious, that, finding the patient as yet free from fever, they were not without hopes of his final recovery, though, as they foretold, it must be a slow one.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

"Il existe dans la nature un eff t de perspective assez vulgaire pour que chacun en ait été frappé. Ce phenoméne a de grandes analogies dans la nature morale. Si vous voyez de loin le versant d'une allee sur une route, la pente vous semble horriblement rapide, et quand vous y êtes, vous vous demandez si ce chemin est bien réellement la côte ardue que vous aviez naguère aperçue. Ainsi, dans le monde moral, une situation dangereuse epouvante, en perspective; mais lorsque nous sommes sur le terrain de la faute, il semble qu'elle n'existe plus."

Lady Walmer remained in strict seclusion at Paris, waiting to pass the first weeks of her widowhood and hoping that Heatherfield would then join her, to leave her no more. The death of the husband she had wronged, was hailed with feelings of satisfaction instead of regret, by this callous woman. There could now be no scandalous trial; she was in possession of a large jointure, and she saw no obstacle to her again entering the world as the wife of Heatherfield, and again exciting the jealousy and envy of those who thought the sunshine of her prosperity was eclipsed for ever. The death of the Marquis of Heatherfield, so quickly followed by that of her husband, seemed to her as an intervention of Providence in her favor, and as no trial had taken place to fix the stigma of guilt on her, she hoped that a marriage with Lord Heatherfield would restore her, if not to the former high place she held in society, at least to a respectable one. The reports in the papers could be contradicted by authority, and the whole scandal be made to pass off as a false report, originating in a mistake. She had seen ladies E—— and G——, and half-a-dozen others, situated similarly with herself, recover their positions in the world; then why might not she hope to be equally fortunate?

So thought, and so reasoned this heartless woman, ere her husband had been three weeks consigned to he grave; and she who had so ill-performed the duties of a wife, thought of nothing else but again becoming one. She knew and felt that Heatherfield's sentiments towards her, were those only of pity, and that to take advantage even of these, it was necessary for her to make him believe that their marriage was indispensable.

It was while all this was passing in her

ambitious and worldly mind, that she read in the papers an account of the duel between him and her brother, and that the recovery of Heatherfield was doubtful. It instantly occurred to her, that Lord Bertie would have left England, and what so likely as his coming to France and seeking her out. She knew the severity of his principles, and that if once under his protection, she would no longer be mistress of her actions; so she determined on preserving her lately acquired liberty, by avoiding all chance of meeting with her brother. For a few moments, she thought of setting out for Wales, and establishing herself as garde malade to Heatherfield. It would be a new claim on his pity and gratitude—but then, if he died—(and the possibility of this event, she reflected upon without a tear,)—she would have compromised herself afresh, and inevitably; nay, even if he lived, his notions of propriety might induce him to be more shocked than gratified, by her establishing herself in his house under existing circumstances; and, therefore, she determined on setting out for Italy, there to await his death or recovery.

While Lord Heatherfield was laid on the bed of pain, which it was doubtful that he should ever leave, his friend Desbrow was soothing the last hours of Lord Ayrshire, who expired three days after the duel in Wales. He bequeathed the whole of his personal property to Cecile de Bethune, with all the diamonds belonging to his late wife; and his house in town, with its splendid library and furniture, to Desbrow.

When Desbrow had paid the last duties to his departed friend, he hastened to Wales, and found Lord Heatherfield slowly recovering; the ball had never been extracted, and considerable pain was still felt by the invalid in the region where it was supposed to be lodged; but his medical attendants pronounced that his life was no longer in danger, though it would be many months ere he was restored to his former strength. The meeting between him and Desbrow was highly affecting; the danger to which Heatherfield had been exposed, seemed to have rendered him dearer than ever to his friend, whose heart, softened by the empire that Cecile had acquired over it, and the recent death of the excellent Lord Ayrshire, turned with increased affection to the companion of his youth, who had suffered so severely, mentally, and bodily, since they had parted.

The extreme debility and languor left by Heatherfield's wound, confined him for many days to his bed, after his friend's arrival; those hours were passed with Desbrow by its side, reading to, or conversing with him, his voice modulated to almost feminine softness, not to fatigue too much the over excited nerves of the invalid.

No longer did Desbrow appear the stern monitor that Heatherfield had been wont to consider him; he was now the patient garde malade, and the indulgent friend, whose lips opened but to console or cheer him, and his presence soon produced the most beneficial effect on the mental, as well as bodily health of his friend.

They were some weeks together, before the name of Lady Walmer passed the lips of either. A fear of agitating Heatherfield prevented Desbrow from touching on a subject, which he know to be so painful, and a dread of interrupting the calm which had stolen over his lately embarrassed mind, induced Heatherfield to avoid it.

Letters were delivered one day to Desbrow in the presence of his friend, who having casually cast his eyes on his face while perusing them, was struck by the change in his countenance, and also by Desbrow's sighing; and then looking at him, with an expression of pity in his looks, which convinced Heatherfield that the letter his friend was reading related particularly to him. Their eyes met, and Desbrow's were instantly withdrawn in confusion, which still more confirmed Heatherfield in his opinion that there was some reference to him in his friend's letter. He laid his hand on Desbrow's, and intreated him to tell him if his suspicions were correct.

Desbrow endeavored to evade the subject, but Heatherfield becoming more anxious, he at length admitted that the letter contained some intelligence that had given him pain, and which was calculated to grieve Heatherfield.

"Let me hear it, I beg of you," said the latter; "suspense only aggravates an evil; I am prepared for anything, but do not keep me in doubt."

"Well then," said Desbrow, "I have heard from Cecile de Bethune, who keeps up a regular correspondence with Lady Emily Vavasour, and who informs me that she is in very delicate health."

"Alas! this I already know," said Heatherfield; who now informed his friend of the meeting at the inn, on his route to Wales, and of the powerful effect it had produced on his feelings.

Confidence once established, every thought of Heatherfield's was now laid

open to Desbrow, who listened with deep attention and sympathy to the development of his friend's sentiments.

"Then you still feel the same devoted attachment to Lady Emily?" asked Desbrow.

"Can you doubt it," replied Heatherfield, "when every thought, every wish, of my heart, have her, and her only, for their object?"

"And yet," said Desbrow, "with this fond and exclusive attachment for one woman, you have been, from a mistaken sense of honor, on the point of devoting the rest of your life to another. Let me speak to you with candor, my dear Heatherfield," continued his friend; "recollect that in discharging what you believe to be a duty prescribed by honor, you are violating the more sacred duties commanded by morality and conscience. In winning the affections of the young and unsophisticated heart of Lady Emily Vavasour, you became bound to her, and her only, by every tie that true honor can impose. In yielding you her heart, she broke through no duties, violated no ties, and, sanctioned by her parents, who reposed a perfect confidence in you, she bestowed on you her undivided affection. She was taught to consider herself as your affianced wife, her family and your own looked on her as such, and a few days would have ratified at the altar the vows of unalterable attachment which you had exchanged. Your evil genius, in the shape of Lady Walmer, interposed between you and happiness, by a conduct at once the most selfish and indelicate. She seeks you out; even beneath the roof of the pure being to whom she knew you were betrothed. She practises on your vanity, and forces you into a situation, the detection of which leads to her exposure, and she then calls upon you to pay the penalty of *her* bad conduct. You, my dear friend, have been only weak, but she has been most wicked; and yet to such a person are you sacrificing not only your own happiness, but that of a pure and charming creature, formed to present a model of domestic virtue as a wife, as she already does as a daughter. Every feeling of your own heart is at variance with the sacrifice Lady Walmer would impose on you; and surely every sentiment of morality must oppose it. You cannot respect or place confidence in a woman whose conduct has been so wholly deficient in propriety and virtue, and can you pass your life with, or give your name to, one in whom you cannot place implicit reliance? She, who knows you love another, and yet could demand you to devote yourself to her, is totally unworthy of such a sacrifice, and in making it, you become her dupe. Forget that artificial, that vitiated circle, in which a false code of conventional rules has taken the place of that high and pure morality, of which they are ignorant. Morality can never dictate to you to marry a woman who has compromised herself, and you also, not by yielding to your seduction, but by following the impulses of her own ill-governed mind. If you loved her, I should say, marry her not; because I know, that, without fixed principles, the happiness of even a marriage of affection must be insecure; but not loving her, to marry would be weakness, worse than weakness, folly. I see you are going to tell me that you owe her a reparation; but, you, my dear Heatherfield, have started from the beginning of this fatal business with a false notion; hence, all your inferences have been incorrect. You reason, and would act, as if *you* had sought and pursued *her*, and led her to the precipice that has engulfed her; whereas, it was *she* who pursued you, when you had left her, as you thought, for ever, and lured you to that scene, which ended in her deserved exposure. The repugnance you feel to her makes you doubtful of your own motives, and leads you to think you are performing a duty, because you are acting against your wishes; when, to a calm and dispassionate judgment, duty, honor, and reason, alike pronounce against your forming any alliance with Lady Walmer. Were you to-morrow her husband, you could not regain for her the position which she formerly held in society, an inferior one *she* could not brook without feelings that would embitter her life and yours too; so that in marrying her, you not only impose a dreadful penance on yourself, but avail her nothing by your sacrifice. I talk to you at present in a worldly point of view on this subject, because, unfortunately, you have hitherto only considered it with a reference to worldly opinions. But look at it as it refers to morals, and you will see, my dear friend, that in marrying Lady Walmer, you are dooming yourself to misery, and rewarding bad conduct, and the most gross and unblushing selfishness, with the sacrifice of your happiness and respectability."

The reasoning of Desbrow fixed the wavering mind of Heatherfield, and he promised his friend, that he never would

become the husband of Lady Walmer, a decision which Desbrow urged him to communicate to that lady, with as much promptitude and candor as possible.

From the moment that Heatherfield adopted this wise resolution, his mind became more composed, and his health began to regain its former vigor; he addressed a long and explanatory letter to Lady Walmer, in which he informed her that, "finding it impossible to conquer the affection he felt for another, he never could offer her his hand." He reminded her that, "when he promised to devote himself to her, she was a deserted wife, threatened with a scandalous exposure, by a trial and divorce, of which, as he had been the involuntary cause, he was willing to make the only amends in his power; but now," he added, "the case was wholly changed, she was a widow, with a large fortune, no trial or exposure menaced her, and the fact of their being in different countries, would contradict the statements which had been made in the papers." He reminded her that, "from the moment of meeting her at Lord Vavasour's, he had never made her a single profession of attachment, nay, that he had candidly confessed to her his attachment to another. Reflection had taught him that their union was incompatible with his happiness, and never could insure hers, and that therefore he had abandoned the idea of it for ever."

This letter despatched, his mind was at rest from one painful subject, but turned to another, with deep and unceasing interest.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

"Mais du sein des plus tristes pensées, peut naître chez la femme, un sentiment qui la rappelle à sa veritable destinée, qui est d'aimer. Tel on voit, dans un terrain ravagé s'elever du milieu des ruines, un arbuste qu'elles devaient engloutir."

Emily Vavasour did not yield to the despair that threatened to wreck her peace, when Lord Heatherfield was found to be unworthy of her affection, without struggling, as only a woman can struggle, with a passion that had interwoven itself with her very being; and for the conquest of which health, nay, life itself, too often pays the price.

However appearances were against Lord Heatherfield, and though her reason was forced to condemn him, her heart still refused to assent to his condemnation; and she pitied, more than she blamed, a conduct that destroyed her happiness, but could not triumph over her affection. How often did she recal to memory, the happy hours passed in his society, the delightful plans for the future, and the innumerable traits of delicacy, and a high sense of honor, which she had so frequently discovered in his sentiments. Their last interview, when, with such visible agitation, he had intreated her, however appearances might be against him, never to believe that he could ever love another, often came back to her recollection; and well did she fulfil this his last request!

Such was her perfect freedom from selfishness, that could she have been assured that Heatherfield was happy, she believed that she would have been less wretched; but, judging of his feelings by her own, she knew that his sufferings must be aggravated by the consciousness of having entailed unhappiness on her; and while all pronounced against him, this pure and noble-minded girl, the only sufferer from his conduct, wept over his errors, and pitied him more than herself.

From the moment that Emily had considered Heatherfield as her affianced husband, she had not only viewed him as the partner and protector who was to cheer her path on earth, but with whom she was to share eternity. She had, in their hours of confidence, mingled aspirations of another world, with her hopes of happiness in this, and Heatherfield had listened to her with pleased attention, thinking that, "truths divine came mended from that tongue." Religion had never before been presented to him under so attractive a form; it had been an abstract point in his mind, seldom referred to, and alas! still more seldom made the guide of his actions. It was something to be adopted when the hey-day of his blood should be over, when pleasure no longer should beckon him with her smiles; in short, like too many, he thought rarely on the subject, and when he did think, postponed attending to its dictates until age should have rendered him unfit for aught else.

Thus it is but too often, to that *Being*, who has given us *all*, we refuse to offer the flowers or fruits of our lives, and are only willing to give the withered leaves, that the winter of existence has left us, happy if we are not cut off in the midst of our hopes, and forced to yield to death, when we had prepared only for life.

Of all the passions, a pure and sincere

love is the one which most tends to elevate the mind to its Creator. The insufficiency of life, for perfect happiness, then first makes itself felt, and who, that has loved and reflected, as all must, on the precarious tenure of existence, and on the possibility of the object, that lends life all its charms, being snatched from us, without feeling the necessity of religion, to prolong, in another world, the happiness that blesses or blessed us, in this. This sentiment is always felt, in proportion to the affection entertained, and it chastens and refines it; for never is the person beloved, so tenderly cherished, as when the lover reflects on the possibility of such a separation, and clings to that faith which offers the only hope of reunion.

Emily Vavasour had taught Lord Heatherfield the first lessons of religion; he imbibed them, with those of love, which she had inspired, and she had seen, with such true delight, the interest with which he listened to her, when she breathed her meek hopes of their union being sanctified in a future existence, that, in mourning over his errors, she wept not less for the Christian turned from the right path, than for the husband who was to have brightened hers. Day after day, her cheek became paler, her form lost its rounded contour, and her eyes, their brightness; but still, she complained not, and tried to assume a cheerfulness foreign to her heart, to conceal from her doting parents the sorrow that was preying on her peace. She endeavored, but in vain, to bear up against it; the struggle was more than her gentle nature could support, and it made such rapid inroads on her health, as to terrify Lord and Lady Vavasour, who might be said to live but in their child.

Emily no longer hoped for happiness on earth, but she prayed that health and peace might be granted her, to enable her to cheer and solace the old age of her parents, who looked to her, and her only, for happiness. She had opened every secret of her heart to Cecile, who had been the confidant of her affection, from the day that Lord Heatherfield had demanded her hand; and, now, that her hopes were blighted, she had a melancholy pleasure in writing to her absent friend, and pouring forth to her the feelings that she concealed from her parents, but whose effects were only too visible in her altered looks and broken health.

Desbrow had explained to Cecile, the fatal entanglement of Lord Heatherfield, and his unabated attachment to Emily, and Cecile had made her friend acquainted with it. The following is an extract from Emily's answer to that letter, which better shows the state of her feelings, than the most labored description would do.

"I am aware, my beloved Cecile, of the kindness of your motive, for telling me, that I am still loved by Heatherfield. In the confidence of a friendship, that has never known restraint, and in the belief, that a few days would have seen me the wife of Lord Heatherfield, I opened every secret of my heart to you, and the affection that heart cherished for him, was revealed in all its warmth—all its sincerity.

"He has placed an insurmountable barrier between us; and you, dearest, would try to soothe the womanly feelings, so deeply, cruelly, wounded, by telling me, I am still beloved. Alas! this conviction has never left me; but, far from soothing, it only adds to my grief; for, in addition to supporting the pangs of my own disappointed affection, I have to feel for him who is more unhappy, because self-reproach must be added to his sorrow.

"Heatherfield's is not a mind to bear up against the knowledge that he is living in sin and shame, without suffering bitterly; and the unhappy woman who has caused this misery is little calculated to alleviate it.

"Think not that I utter this censure in bitterness; I do not entertain the feeling; but, oppressed as she must be with the remorse, that never fails to pursue conduct like hers, she cannot soothe those self reproaches, which inevitably must be experienced by him who has sacrificed for her every moral and religious duty.

"The picture of two persons condemned to drag on existence together, no longer able to respect each other, and having forfeited the respect of others, is too melancholy to be contemplated without dread.

"It is in this fearful position, that the image of him, so loved, presents itself to me, wearing away life, in sin and shame, and wishing, yet fearing, death.

"You know, dearest Cecile, that I have ever looked on life as a gift of such brief duration, that a future world has occupied more of my thoughts than the present. I had garnered up my hopes of meeting *him* there, after having fulfilled our pilgrimage on earth; but now—I dread to look forward to that future state, which has hitherto formed the bright vista of all my views; for his conduct not only separates us *here*, but terrifies me for *hereafter*. He believes, that in devoting himself to a married woman, he is performing a duty imposed by

honor; but when the duties, honor imposes, are performed at the expense of morality and religion, he who fulfils them must have little knowledge of true religion, or he could not neglect its sacred laws in obedience to worldly conventions."

When the intelligence of Lord Walmer's death reached Emily, she naturally concluded that Lord Heatherfield's marriage with the widow would take place, as soon as decency allowed it; and, though some natural tears filled her eyes, at the thought that another would stand in that relation to him, which she once thought herself destined to fill, still the pure sentiments of disinterested affection triumphed over selfish feelings, and she rejoiced that *he* would no longer be compelled to live in sin and shame, and that his union with Lady Walmer, would be rendered respectable, if not happy, by the nuptial benediction.

She wrote to Cecile, about this period, and referring to her feelings, said, "I have hitherto wasted much of my health and peace, in ineffectual struggles to banish Heatherfield from my heart; there is something so indelicate in the notion of cherishing an affection for one who has devoted himself to another, that it has humiliated me in my own eyes; but now that he will soon be the husband of Lady Walmer, I trust I shall have courage to think of him but as one, to whom I wish happiness, and for whom I pray with as much sincerity as when I hoped to partake his lot.

Whenever, and, alas! it is but too frequently I find his image intrude itself on my mind, I have recourse to prayer, and I find this, which, in other and happier days, added to my happiness, now soothes my feelings, and sheds a balm, that reason alone could never bestow."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

"In aping the manners of foreign countries, we lose what is best in our own, and only expose ourselves to the ridicule of those we imitate."

Time passed heavily with Cecile, for whom the gaieties of the French capital had little charms. Her forbearance was often put to the proof in the society of the Duchesse de Montcalm, where the same system of re-modelling her person was continued; and, in addition to which, constant attempts to re-model her mind, as well as manners, were made. Her natural dignity was considered as English stiffness: her feminine timidity, as *gaucherie*, and her maidenly reserve, as prudery.

The duchesse often stated, that all things considered, it was fortunate that *la petite* Cecile had secured a rich English husband; for, certainly, she was not formed to shine at Paris—the grand object of a French woman's life—and in this opinion, Cecile perfectly coincided.

While waiting for their carriage, one night in the vestibule of the Opera, the sounds of familiar voices struck on the ear of Cecile, in the following dialogue:—

"Well, Lady Scamper, you may call this pleasure, but I call it an infernal bore. Our carriage was announced, and because you choose to stay chatting with some of your new friends, the *gens d' armes* have sent it off: and here we are, in a pleasant position. What's to be done now? I can't go *parley vouing* in search of it, that's clear.

"You really are incorrigible, Lord Scamper; would you have me to be as rude and ill-bred as yourself, to break off a conversation with the charming Marquise de Vaudeville, merely because the carriage was called? Have I not remained in the round room of the opera in London, a full half-hour, while the Stentorian lungs of half-a-dozen link boys re-echoed my name; and why not do the same here?"

"Why! for the simple reason, that in London we have no *gens d'armes* at our theatres; but here, as you must observe, it is quite different: but it serves you right, you never were, never would be, satisfied, till you came to Paris; and a pleasant time I have had of it, ever since we have been here. Cheated and starved into the bargain, you pretend to be charmed with every thing, just out of opposition to me; but if ever you catch me at Paris again, why I give you leave to hang me."

While this conversation was going on, the loud tones of Lord Scamper attracted the attention of all the persons who passed near him; and they smiled, whispered, and shrugged their shoulders, by turns, to the no small horror of Lady Scamper, who, in vain, endeavored to impose silence on her lord. At this moment, he caught a glance of Cecile, and leading his wife to her, he held out his hand, and declared, he was delighted to meet Mademoiselle; it so reminded him of England.

Lady Scamper expressed great pleasure at renewing her acquaintance with Cecile, and professed to be charmed with Paris, and the Parisians.

"We have only been here a few days,"

continued Lady Scamper, "and had I known where to find you, I should have certainly been at your door."

"Well, Ma'amselle," said the obtuse lord, "I must confess, you don't look as rosy as you did in Scotland; but no wonder, for I dare say, if the truth were known you have been starved, like us: nothing but *kickshaws*, day after day, washed down by sour wine after. For me, I have lost eight pounds in my weight since I have been here; a good thing for Juno and Nimrod, but devilish bad for me. Talk of their restaurants indeed, a droll way to restore one, by starvation."

"Do, pray, spare Mademoiselle de Bethune the enumeration of your miseries," said Lady Scamper, with an air of disdain.

"Why, I don't see why I should not speak out," replied the husband; "ma'amselle was always goodnatured and civil, and will pity me; while you, who were always of one mind with me before we were married, have never once agreed in opinion with me, ever since."

"*Mon Dieu, il est desesperant!*" said the Lady Janet, now metamorphosed into Lady Scamper, turning her eyes to Cecile.

"Ay, there you go again, with your French, which no one can understand; why, would you believe it, ma'amselle, when you spoke to the waiter, the first day, he told her he did not understand German."

The Duchesse de Montcalm stood aloof all this time, regarding Lord Scamper with looks in which disgust was depicted, and her carriage being announced, she nodded to Cecile with one of her most imperious glances, to accompany her. Nearly at the same moment, Lady Scamper's *laquais de place* cried out that *la voiture de Milord Scampere* was ready, to which her lord conducted that lady, amid a crowd of grinning spectators and laughing *laquais*, but not, however, until Lady Scamper had obtained the addresses of Cecile, and declared her intention of visiting her next day.

"*Grace à Dieu!* we are rid of your vulgar English friends," exclaimed the duchesse, as the door of her carriage was closed; "who ever saw such people? I was horrified lest any of my acquaintances should have seen us:—you must really contrive, another time, not to see persons of this description, otherwise we shall be mixed up in some caricature of *les Anglaises pour rire*, and exhibited on the stalls of the Boulevards. *Dieu quel homme! et Milady, comme elle etoit fagotté.*"

Cecile knew that any defence of her acquaintances, would only tend to draw down on them the still greater displeasure of the duchesse; but, had she been inclined to make one, hers would have been a difficult task, for candor forced her to acknowledge, that, as far as exteriors went, —the only point by which the duchesse judged people—theirs were pre-eminently ridiculous.

Lady Scamper was dressed in the extreme of *la mode*, and affected all the *minauderies* of a Parisian *petite maitresse*, but so clumsily executed that it became a caricature; her broad Scotch accent rendered her French not only unintelligible, but ludicrous, and the loud voice and John Bull-air of her *caro sposo*, contrasted most ridiculously with her attempt at refinement and French elegance.

Lady Janet had flattered Lord Scamper so judiciously, by assenting to all his opinions, and admiring his appearance, that he had rewarded her exertions to please him by the offer of his hand—an offer which was gladly accepted—and she became Lady Scamper, soon after Cecile had left Scotland.

Lord Scamper observed to a friend, a few days previous to his marriage, that he "never would have tied that knot with his tongue which he could not untie with his teeth,"—meaning the nuptial tie—had he not found a woman who said amen to all he was pleased to utter.

"My spaniel Dido is not more submissive," said Scamper; "for though I try Lady Janet by contradicting flatly to-day, what I maintained yesterday, it is all the same to her; she never has any opinion but mine: this is what I call the only solid foundation to build matrimonial happiness upon; and so I have made up my mind to marry."

But no sooner did the Lady Janet find herself installed in the honors of wedlock, than she decided on using all the privileges that state bestowed; and her sapient lord, a few weeks after, acknowledged to the same friend, that "marriage was the drollest thing in the world for changing people; now, there's Lady Scamper, she's no more like Lady Janet that was, than I'm like Hercules. Would you believe it, that she who was so fond of horses and dogs a few weeks ago, that she would talk to me by the hour of Juno, Nimrod, and Dido, now declares that she can't abide the sight of horses out of Hyde Park or the streets, and as for dogs she abhors them! Whatever I think, she is

sure to think the contrary; so that I may say, that ever since the law made us *one*, we have been *two*, for we have never agreed on any single point ever since."

The first exertion of Lady Scamper's power was exemplified in their visit to Paris; he detested France and French people, but she carried her point by fixing him in all the discomfort of an *hotel garni* in the rue de Rivoli, where he vented his discontent in curses both loud and deep, from "morning sun till eve of dewy night."

While Lady Scamper was occupied with a host of milliners, dress-makers, &c. &c. her lord was left to his own resources: he strolled into the yards of all the horse-dealers, but returned in disgust, declaring he could only find there all the done-up horses of London for the last two seasons, for which the Parisian *maquignons* demanded thrice their original value. The club in the rue de Grammont, was next resorted to; and here he found time pass more quickly, if less profitably, than in other places: for a rubber of whist, a party at ecarté or piquet, beguiled the time from three in the afternoon to half-past six, and his banker's book soon bore evidence that his foreign acquaintances excelled in these games, if they were less expert at his favorite amusement of hunting.

While the husband got rid of hundreds at the club, the wife expended no small sums with the artistes whom she favored with her commands, and ere she had passed a fortnight at Paris, she had incurred debts to more than the amount of the year's pin-money paid her in advance, and which she had brought with her to France. She had always heard that every thing was so cheap at Paris, that she could see no necessity for refusing herself any article of dress that pleased her fancy; and it was not until she had seen the bills sent in, that she discovered that fifteen louis for a dress hat, and nearly half that sum for one for the morning, quickly made the bill of her *modiste* run up to a sum, the contemplation of which lengthened her visage, in proportion to its curtailment of the contents of her purse. Paris, then, after all, was not the cheap place she had heard of, and Monsieur Herbault was a *dear* man in more senses than one. Positively she must buy no more, and what was very provoking, she must ask Lord Scamper to advance her a portion of next year's allowance, to enable her to pay her debts.

Lord Scamper had returned to his hotel an hour later than his usual time, a loser of several hundreds, and in a state of ill humor with himself and all the world—but, no! we must expunge the last part of the sentence, for his ill humor extended only to the Parisian world, while his partiality to England, and every thing English, rose in proportion to his dissatisfaction with France. He found his better half ready dressed to receive him, and was greeted by a kind smile—a demonstration of welcome that had of late become a stranger to her lips at his approach—instead of, as he expected, an angry reproof for having kept her waiting dinner. As usual, he found the dinner execrable, and expressed his disgust of its component parts, to which Lady Scamper cordially assented. No less gratified than surprised, at this agreeable change in her opinions and manners, he ventured, after something between a sigh and a groan, to pronounce that Paris was an infernal place.

"I quite agree with you, my dear William," said Lady Scamper; "it is an abominable place, not fit to be compared to London. Only fancy, but no! you cannot fancy such a thing, as that abominable *modiste* charging me fifteen louis for each of my chapeaux, while I, poor simple creature, believing they could be had here so much cheaper than in London, have bought not less than twelve, fancying that I was economising, God knows how much! Then, Foissin has persuaded me to have such a number of pretty things from him, that hearing the price only in francs, I did not quite understand the actual amount; and, lo and behold I find that I owe him two hundred louis, when I fancied that fifty would more than pay him: I really must ask you, my dear William, to lend me three or four hundred pounds in advance of my next year's pin money."

"The devil you must!" said Lord Scamper; "well, Janet, I must say, you have made a neat affair of your visit to Paris, and your knowledge of the French language. I always told you *they* did not understand *you*, and it is now quite clear, *you* did not understand them."

"It is quite useless," returned Lady Scamper, her color rising while she spoke, "to dwell on what cannot now be remedied; lend me the money, and henceforth you shall not have to complain of my imprudence."

"What you ask, is much easier said than done," replied the husband, "for

while you left me on my own hands, in self-defence, in order to kill time, I went to the club in the rue de Grammont, and hang me, if those cursed Frenchmen have not cleaned me out of above two thousand, the sum I had appropriated to this pleasurable trip of yours."

"Why you surely can't mean to say, that you have lost *two* thousand pounds?" said Lady Scamper; "this really would be folly; and so, Lord Scamper, you think you have the right of blaming me for spending a few paltry hundreds, for which I have, at *least*, something to show, while *you* have lost thousands, and can show nothing but your ill-humor and ill-breeding to me."

A scene of mutual recrimination here ensued, but the eloquence and lungs of the lady, having conquered those of her lord, a treaty of peace was signed, of which the basis was, an oblivion of the past fortnight; a draft to Lady Scamper for five hundred pounds; a promise that my lord would play no more, which he religiously resolved to keep; and a determination, on the part of her ladyship, that she would buy no more, *unless* something *very*, *very* pretty, should chance to tempt her.

Lord Scamper indulged in a few extra glasses of Sherry to cheer his depressed spirits; and then, escorted his wife to the opera, where, as we have already shown, they encountered Cecile de Bethune, and her haughty chaperon.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

"Une union, privée des rapports de goûts, et d'education, est nuisible à la paix, et porte obstacle au bonheur."

EVEN-TEMPERED as was Cecile de Bethune, she found it difficult to bear with equanimity, the various domestic annoyances with which she had to contend. Madame de la Rue, from being constantly present, was the most insupportable; for she destroyed all the hours of privacy, that might otherwise have passed tranquilly. She thought herself obliged to be always in attendance, and had not that most essential of all requisites, in a *dame de compagnie*, the art of sitting still, or silently following some sedentary occupation. If Cecile was drawing. reading, or writing, Madame de la Rue would move to different parts of the room, in search of something, which, when found, seemed no longer necessary; she would beat time with her fingers on the table, or with her feet on the tabouret; bend forward every fifteen minutes, to look at the pendule on the chimney-piece; and give sundry other symptoms of ennui and fidgetism, of which not all Cecile's powers of abstraction, could enable her to resist feeling the influence.

Her parrot and lap-dog were, for the first few days, established in Cecile's salon, where they displayed their powers of pleasing, very much to the delight of their mistress, but to the total discomfiture of Cecile, who found it so impossible to pursue her usual avocations, while one screamed as incessantly as the other barked, that she was forced to request that they might be banished her presence;—a request that Madame de la Rue resented, at least, as far as *les convenances* permitted her to show her sense of the slight offered to her favorites. She gave sundry hints of the hardness of some hearts, that could be insensible to the domestic affections; her Coco had more attractions than any child, without its defects; and as to her dear, sweet Bijou, "he was," as she stated, "unrivalled. Such was his intelligence, that, if any one asked the dear creature where was his *belle maitresse*, he instantly ran to her, and seized her robe; he could imitate the scream of the parrot so perfectly, that it was almost impossible to distinguish the difference; and, she must add, that poor dear Coco nearly equalled Bijou in intelligence, for it could imitate his bark, perfectly, which never failed to vex Bijou so much, that he retorted by screaming like Coco."

The disagreements between Mesdames de la Rue and Le Moine, had daily increased; the latter declared that her slumbers were broken every night, by Bijou and Coco, and the former stated the utter impossibility of her closing her eyes, if both did not share her chamber. The two French women never met without a quarrel, and never parted without increased dislike, which neither were disposed to dissemble. Madame de la Rue declared that her café, that indispensable requisite of a Frenchwoman's comfort, was opaque, and smoked, *too* constantly to admit of her attributing it solely to chance; and a malicious smile from Madame le Moine, when the accusation was made, tended rather to confirm than refute the charge.

Cecile had been frequently appealed to by both parties, and had adopted the diplomatic measure, in doubtful cases, of

inculcating the doctrine of conciliation, and mutual forbearance. But neither of the belligerents were disposed to be guided by so pacific a counsel; the war, therefore, was carried on by mutual aggression, until hatred took the place of dislike. Madame de la Rue taught Coco to cry out "*Vieille laideron*," the moment Madame le Moine appeared, and Bijou was trained to bark furiously, and to pull the lower end of her drapery, when she entered the room. This produced an ungovernable rage on the part of Madame le Moine, who, to be revenged, taught the large parrot, before noticed, in the ante-chamber, to cry "*Vieux monstre*," every time Madame de la Rue passed through it.

This state of things had gone on for several weeks, when the morning after Cecile had encountered Lord and Lady Scamper at the opera, the parrot and lap-dog of Madame de la Rue, wandered from her chamber to the ante-room, and by some mischance, suspected to be not purely accidental, a cafetière of boiling café was upset over Bijou, and Coco received sundry personal injuries; at least so concluded Madame de la Rue, who was drawn by the reiterated screams of her favorites to the spot whence their cries proceeded. Her presence seemed to increase their screams; they both rushed to her protecting arms, which were extended to receive them, and a new silk dress, whose purchase had nearly drained the purse of Madame de la Rue, soon bore ineffaceable proofs of Bijou's accident, as streams of café mixed with dust, and portions of the coat of her canine pet, covered the whole of the front of her robe, as well as the corsage and sleeves. The old parrot no sooner recognised her, than in its loudest, shrillest tones, it reiterated the cry of "*Vieux monstre!*" while her own ill-used bird, with plumage ruffled, and angry eyes, fixed its glance on Madame le Moine, and screamed; "*Vieille laideron! Vieille laideron!*" and Bijou, barking and whining by turns, wiped himself dry in the best silk dress of his luckless mistress.

The vociferation of the parrots, so insulting to the *amour propre* of both the old Frenchwomen, increased their anger, until it became ungovernable, and they vented it in every term of reproach with which their copious vocabulary of insulting epithets furnished them.

It was at this moment that Lord and Lady Scamper entered the arena of battle, and both, for a moment, stood confounded at the scene which presented itself, and the war of words from the two combatants, mingled with the screams of the parrots, and the violent barking of Bijou. Lord Scamper quickly recovered himself, and entering with true zest into the ludicrous exhibition before him, cried out, "Go it, my hearties! well done old ones! five to two against the dog-woman! the one with the keys has it hollow!" while Lady Scamper, half frightened, yet amused, followed the servant, who at length vouchsafed to attend to her request to be led to Mademoiselle de Bethune.

"I say; old ones, suppose you box it out, instead of scolding, ay, by Jove, and pit the parrots against each other? What a pity we have not a second dog to fight with that yelping cur!"

The Frenchwomen understood not a single word of Lord Scamper's address, but they saw enough by his smiles and animated gestures, to conclude that he was ridiculing them, an indignity which they deeply resented, and both turned on him with a torrent of abuse, that, luckily for his lordship, he as little comprehended, as they did his English. He being of the old opinion, that discretion is the better part of valor, quitted the ante-room, and entered the salon, nearly convulsed with laughter.

Lady Scamper had employed the moments of his absence, in giving Cecile a hurried statement of her ill-assorted marriage, its consequent *desagrémens*, and her regrets.

"You can form no idea, my dear friend," said she, "what a dreadful person he is; he exposes me in every society, can talk of nothing but horses and dogs, and makes me blush for him every moment."

Cecile could not resist telling her, that, as Lord Scamper had always, before marriage, chosen these topics for his conversation, the annoyance was not a new one.

"True," replied Lady Scamper, blushing through the rouge that covered her cheeks; "but then, that was in England, where people were accustomed to his ways, and where his fortune and station being known, his vulgarities were tolerated. But here, *ma chère, c'est autre chose.* I see all the French people at the ambassador's, shrugging up their shoulders, and shrinking away from him in horror; while the English, afraid of being confounded in the ridicule he excites, draw away from him, as if he were some low-born cit, instead of being a nobleman of large fortune."

"Then, if you permit me to offer you my opinion," said Cecile, "I should advise your staying in England, where, as you say, people are accustomed to the harmless peculiarities of Lord Scamper, and where his station and fortune command respect."

At this moment, the subject of their conversation entered the room, and when his violent paroxysm of laughter, permitted him to speak, he addressed Cecile with, "*Bong jour! bong jour!* there's French for you, mademoiselle; you see what progress I make in *parley vouing.*"

"For pity's sake, Lord Scamper," said his wife, "spare my nerves; you really make me ill with your barbarous attempts at French."

"Well, there's a good one, however," replied his lordship; "would you believe it, Miss Bethune?"

"Good Heavens, Lord Scamper," interrupted my lady, "how can you be so shocking as to call Mademoiselle de Bethune—*miss?*"

"Why, did not you stop me short, a a minute before, for what you called my barbarous attempts at French, and then, the minute I speak English, you fly out at me again. You are fifty times more fretful than Juno ever was, though I look on her as the most fidgetty mare in England."

"I beg, Lord Scamper, that you will not make any of your vulgar comparisons."

"Vulgar comparisons! whew! whew!" whistled the fox-hunter; "well, that's a good one! Why, I say that there is not a woman in France, ay, or in England, that might not be flattered to be compared to Juno, and she beats you out hollow, being ten times better on her pins, and neater about her pasterns."

"Pray, remember that you are not in the stable, or conversing with your grooms," retorted Lady Scamper angrily.

"Oh! for the matter of that," said his lordship, "I have talked to you about Juno, and all the rest of my stud, much more than ever I talked to my grooms, and I never saw any of them take half so much interest in the subject—that was before we were married, when you persuaded me that you liked horses and dogs, just as much as I do! though, ever since the knot has been tied, you affect to dislike them. Hang me, if ever I would have married you, if you had not led me to believe that our tastes perfectly agreed; and I say, it has been a devilish take-in, on your part."

Lady Scamper blushed deeply, and endeavored to change the subject, as the *naïveté* of her husband's retorts, led her to fear he might be still more communicative.

The Comte de Bethune entered the saloon, and was presented to Lady and Lord Scamper, by his daughter; he put on his courtly graces, to which the lady replied with becoming politeness, while her lord shook him by the hand and repeated, "*Bong jour! bong jour!*—I say, ma'amselle, does the old boy speak English?" asked Lord Scamper, in what was meant to be a whisper, but which was audible to every one in the room.

Cecile replied in the negative, and saw, with dismay, the angry glance with which her father regarded Lord Scamper; but his lordship concluding that, because Comte de Bethune did not *speak* English, he could not understand it, said,

"Well, well, perhaps it's all for the best, for the old one looks so devilish grumpy, that most probably, if we could comprehend each other, we should soon come to a misunderstanding;" a probability, in which, notwithstanding its *Irishism*, she fully agreed.

Lady Scamper put on her most insinuating smiles, and most amiable manner, in conversing with Comte de Bethune, which her husband observing, he turned to Cecile, and said, "Only look at Janet; she's taking in the old boy just as she used to hoax me before we were married. I'll lay five to two, that if he said the moon's made of green cheese, she'd swear to it, now that she's set her mind on pleasing him; that's her way, but it's only lately I have found it out. Why, hang me, if the old boy does not swallow it all; look how sweet he looks, like an old monkey with a piece of sugar."

Cecile felt a strong inclination to laugh, but a sense of propriety restrained her; and assuming a grave air, she endeavored to divert Lord Scamper's attention to some other point.

In answer to her inquiries, if their hotel was comfortable, he burst out into a loud laugh, "Comfortable! comfortable! why, miss—or ma'amselle, as I ought to say, though both mean the same thing—as far as I can find, comfort, or comfortable, are things unknown in France. Why, would you believe it, that having only one small chest of drawers in my room which could not hold half my things, I wanted to get a second; and not liking to ask Janet, who hates trouble, to interpret for me, I referred to the dictionary, and looked over it

for above an hour for chest of drawers? But not finding the word, I bethought me of looking for the two words separately, which I soon found, and I joined them, and wrote on a piece of paper, *poitrine de calegon.* No sooner did my insolent *laquais de place* read it, than he burst out laughing in my face, and tried to persuade me that *poitrine*, only meant a human chest, and *calegons*, the drawers that we men wear. I said they meant every kind of chest, and had to kick him down stairs for denying it."

Lady Scamper at length took her leave, handed to her carriage by the Comte de Bethune, and followed by her lord, who repeated "*Bong jour, ma'amselle; bong jour;*" giving a ludicrous imitation of the courtly bows of the comte.

When Cecile met her father at dinner, he expressed his approbation of Lady Scamper; he pronounced her *une femme de bon goût, avec beaucoup de savoir vivre;* but her husband was a savage, a vulgarian, who violated *les convenances et la bienseance* every moment, like the generality of his countrymen, and with whom it was impossible a well-bred woman, like Lady Scamper, could be otherwise than unhappy.

## CHAPTER XXX.

"Rien ne donne de la reconnaisance pour un homme qu'on n'aime pas, comme le besoin d'en faire un instrument pour se venger de celui dont on n'a pu se faire aimer."

Lady Walmer proceeded as far as Milan, intending to remain there until she had arranged her future plans. A few days after her arrival, she met the Marchese Buondelmonte, with whom she had been acquainted in England two seasons before, and who having recognised her, hastened to offer his services to do the honors of his native city.

Having seen her one of the leading persons in the fashionable circles in London, he was too happy to present her to some of the most distinguished of his acquaintances; and though she informed him that her recent widowhood precluded her mixing in general society, she yielded acquiescence to his assembling at her hotel a select circle of the *haut ton* of Milan; who found *la belle et riche veuve*, so much to their tastes, that she became *fête* at every side, and the object of general admiration.

As there is no English minister at Milan, and few of our wandering country people stay there longer than a few days *en passant*, Lady Walmer's history was unknown there, and she received all the attentions to which she might have laid claim previous to her *esclandre*. The high tone of fashion about her, the ease and elegance of her manners, her personal beauty, and her large fortune, rendered her an idol with the Milanese. Many of the principi, duchi, marchesi, and conti, attracted by her beauty, became fixed in their attentions by the fame of her wealth, which was exaggerated to more than four times its real amount; and Penelope had not more suitors when the return of Ulysses relieved her from their importunities, than had the gay and blooming widow. But, unlike Penelope, she was more inclined to weave than undo the web that occupied her. She had a smile and *mot amiable*, for each of her adorers, and anticipated with pleasure the triumph of showing them in her chains to Lord Heatherfield, *if* he should come; and if he came not, which she had lately accustomed herself to think possible—why then—she had only to select a husband from out the crowd of her admirers, and settle at Milan, as principessa or duchessa, establish herself as the leader of an exclusive circle, which should rival that of London, and be as brilliant and as—happy—as ere she had known Lord Heatherfield. After all, London was not the *only* place where beauty and fashion met the meed of applause, and Milan had many *agremens*.

So reasoned Lady Walmer; who had lately made considerable progress in that practical philosophy which teaches the enjoyment of the good within reach, as preferable to regrets for that which is unattainable.

The letter from Lord Heatherfield, explanatory of his sentiments, which had been forwarded to her to Milan, confirmed her in her new philosophy; and she determined to change her name as soon as she could leave off the external trappings of mourning. She engaged the Palazzo Serbeloni for some months, and filled it with a train of domestics suitable to her station and fortune. The privacy which she had affected to *afficher* on first arriving at Milan, was soon exchanged for the splendor of a *maison montè;* and her dinners and *soirèes* became the focus of attraction *elite* of the society at Milan.

Among the adorers who aspired to win the smiles of *la belle veuve*, Il Principe Romano was the most distinguished. Handsome, well-mannered, of a noble family,

said to possess a large fortune, his attentions at first gratified her vanity, and ended by becoming necessary to her pleasures. He lived *en prince;* his palazzo was one of the finest at Milan; his equipage the most brilliant on the corso; and his expenditure so lavish, that only a princely revenue could support it. He attached himself to Lady Walmer with a pertinacity that soon banished less persevering admirers from competing with him for her hand, and he urged his suit with such empressement, that she had consented to accept him for a husband, ere yet he had passed the accustomed probation of a lover.

His impatience to call her his, flattered her vanity; and compared with the indifference of Lord Heatherfield, excited afresh in her selfish mind the most vindictive feelings towards the latter, and an anxious desire to humiliate him. What more effectual method could be adopted than that of linking her fate with another? then—and only then—would he become sensible of the treasure he had lost.

So argued Lady Walmer, for, notwithstanding all the proofs of indifference she had received from Lord Heatherfield, her egregious vanity blinded her to the extent of it.

Her engagement with the Principe Romano, soon acquired all the publicity which his declaration could give it; and a crowd of Milanese nobility, the relations, or connections of her future husband, flocked around *la belle veuve.* She still remained firm to her intention, of not marrying, until the year of her widowhood, was expired, although Il Principe warmly and repeatedly urged her to abridge the period of his misery.

There was more truth in this last phrase than is often to be found in similar ones; for, if not in positive misery, the mind of her affianced husband was in any state rather than that of ease, and never did a lover look forward with more impatience to the nuptial hour, than did Il Principe Romano.

Expensive habits—indulged, until they had entailed on him the most serious pecuniary embarrassments—had led him to the spendthrift's fatal resource—the gaming-table; and there, the embarrassments he sought to retrieve, soon became positive ruin. He had expended his last thousand of ready money, mortgaged his estates and palazzo, to their full value, and exhausted the generosity of friends, and the patience of creditors, when Lady Walmer arrived at Milan, and was pointed out to him, as the Eldorado, that was to restore him to wealth and splendor. His fine person, and distinguished manners, were viewed by his friends and self, as marketable commodities to be bartered for the thousands and tens of thousands, of *l'Anglaise,* and all his friends, most of whom were his creditors also, were as anxious for the completion of his marriage, and from the same motives, as he himself could be. Unlike our own country people, though all Milan were aware of the ruin of Il Principe Romano, not a person breathed it to Lady Walmer. It was not made the subject of conversation, nor was there a single wager made on the *pour et contre* of the marriage taking place, nor did she receive a single anonymous letter, from his enemies, to warn her.

This may seem improbable, but, is, nevertheless, true, for Italians have not only less malice, but more indolence than the English.

Lady Walmer had so little affection for her affianced husband, that, had she doubted his wealth, she would have broken through her engagements with him. But, to prevent the possibility of suspicion, many of the friends to whom he was already deeply indebted, feeling his marriage to be their last chance of payment, came forward with more calculation than generosity, to advance him temporary loans; so that his profusion might have deceived wiser persons than Lady Walmer into a belief that his wealth far exceeded her own.

The interested friends, who furnished the means for supporting his expenses, were most impatient for the completion of his marriage, and urged him on the subject, with quite as much warmth, if with less gentleness, than he urged Lady Walmer.

Matters were in this state, and *la belle veuve* had exchanged her sables for gray, when one night that she was at the opera, with one or two ladies of the highest distinction at Milan, and attended by Il Principe, she saw a party of English enter the opposite box, and recognised in them, Lord and Lady Arden. She felt her cheeks blush their deepest die, as she saw Lady Arden level an opera glass at her, and then, turn with an air of astonishment to the rest of the party to communicate the discovery. In an instant every glass in the box was levelled at her; she saw, or fancied she could see, the malicious smiles and contemptuous looks of each of the individuals, and felt ready to sink into the earth beneath their scornful glances.

A thousand fears rushed through her mind: too well did she know the characters of Lady Arden and some of those who were with her, to admit of her doubting that the whole of her history, painted, in the darkest shades which malice could give it, would be laid before her Milanese friends if they came in contact with that lady, or the party who were travelling with her; and that they would come in contact, she had more than a presentiment, from her knowledge of Lady Arden's partiality to foreigners; which would induce her, if not previously acquainted with any of the Milanese, to bring letters of introduction to some of the most illustrious amongst them.

The Principessa Barberini, who sat next her, having observed the rudeness with which the English in the opposite box continued to gaze at them, observed to Lady Walmer, that her compatriots did not appear to be well-bred; adding, "I hope that my lady Arden is not amongst them; for before I left home, letters of introduction from my friend La Contess Gauche, were sent to me by Lady Arden, and, as I owe La Gauche many kindnesses, I must repay them to the persons she presents to me."

Here then was a confirmation of Lady Walmer's worst fears! In a few hours her story, with all the exaggerations that a malicious disposition and *spirituelle* mind could give them, would be made known, and she would most probably find herself deserted by her Milanese friends, who like all Italians, have a great dread of scandal; because it is unknown amongst them, though they dread not those peculiarities which excite it; if not in all other countries at least in ours.

In Italy, where certain sins—visited with an irretrievable loss of cast in England—are viewed without exciting any suspicion or severity of animadversion, they cannot understand that similar errors call down disgrace on the offenders in our country, which, considering it as the land of political liberty, they believe must be equally that of liberty in manners. Hence, when they see, as frequently occurs, some English Paria universally cut by her compatriots, they look on her with dread, because they cannot imagine, that for merely doing that which they do without concealment or reproach, she could be so severely punished. They, therefore, conclude, that her crimes must be ignominious to merit such ostracism, and they draw off from her in alarm.

Lady Walmer had seen enough of them to be aware of the existence of this peculiarity; and shrank in dismay from being exposed to their *naïve* desertion! Il Principe, too, would *he* still adhere to his intention of marrying her? How provoking that Lady Arden should have arrived at such a crisis, as if on purpose to defeat all her projects and triumphs! All this, and much more passed through the mind of Lady Walmer as she sat with glowing cheeks and burning eyes, writhing beneath the levelled glasses of the opposite box; the music, excellent as it was, sounding discordantly in her ears, and the graceful movements of the dancers, as they seemed to float in air like gigantic flowers borne on the wind, gave her only painful emotions; for her mind was untuned, and pride and shame strove for mastery in her troubled thoughts.

Her lover, if such he might be called, who loved only her wealth, observed the rapid change in her looks and manner; he concluded that she had the fever—that universal malady in sunny climes—and the dread that she might die ere marriage entitled him to her fortune, filled him with alarm. He watched every change in her countenance, and not love itself could be more alarmed than was *interest* on this occasion.

"You are ill, dearest!" whispered he, in accents so resembling those of love, that Lady Walmer, who knew nothing of that deity, except through the medium of novels and romances, mistook the ardor of cupidity, for that of Cupid. "Let me pray you to leave the opera," continued he; "Ah, cruel that you are, why have you withheld from me the right of watching over you in sickness and in health? You are ill; and by the prejudices of your cold country, I shall be excluded from your sick chamber; have pity on me; let our hands be joined to-morrow at the altar, and then this heart will no longer be torn by a thousand fears! for then only shall I have the right to be always near you. Do, most beloved! yield to my intreaties: in pity yield, and I will bless you."

All this rhapsody, uttered in the melting liquid sounds of the sweet south, stole on her ear, with a charm which his accents had never before possessed; for opposite to her sat those who might with half-a-dozen words destroy the unsubstantial fabric, to the creation of which, she had almost wholly devoted the last few months.

She turned to the Principe, and placing

her hand in his, whispered, "It is true, I am ill—very ill: I consent to be yours to-morrow; but let it be arranged that the ceremony shall take place at the Principessa Barberini's, and that *she* shall accompany us to Florence, where the ceremony must be performed at the English Minister's.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

"L'avenir auquel on fait tant de sacrifices et qui nous en récompense si peu; l'avenir, ce souverain dedaigneux, qui presque tonjours prend un autre chemin que celui où on l'attend."

On leaving the Opera, the Prince Romano arranged every thing with his friend, the princess Barberini, for the ceremony of the ensuing day, and stipulated, that she should accompany the bride to Florence, where the marriage must be celebrated, at the house of the English minister. But to this, his last part of the proposed arrangement, the princess objected; because, independently of her wish not to make a third on such an interesting occasion, she was anxious to remain at Milan, to do the honors to Lady Arden; which was the precise object that Lady Walmer so ardently wished to prevent. Her scruples, however, were over-ruled by the perseverance of the prince, in whose interest it need not be added she took a lively part, when we state that to her husband he was some thousands indebted, and that on this marriage depended his sole chance of payment.

Lady Walmer felt something stronger than a *maavaise honte* when she returned to her home, and had to announce to her *femme de chambre* the preparations necessary to be made for the departure of the morrow, and *why* that departure was to take place; but it was some relief to her that her *femme de chambre* was an Italian, and totally unacquainted with her past history. Having given the necessary orders, she sought her pillow, her mind agitated by contending emotions.

In spite of her heartlessness, the past rose up before her; for there are periods when even the utmost unfeeling are forced to own the influence of memory. Her former marriage, contracted with all pomp and ceremony which attend the unions between persons of high station in England, the host of congratulating friends, the weeping relations, whose tears on such occasions have no bitterness, the splendid preparations, all, all rose up once more before her. *He* who had led her a blushing girl to the altar, and who had indulged her wayward fancies, even to satiety, where was he now?—in the grave; and tears, for the first time, followed the reflection. Now, she was in a foreign land, surrounded by strangers, without a single friend on whose fidelity she could count; pledged to contract a marriage with a man she loved not, ere yet more than a few months had passed since the grave closed over the husband of her youth; compelled to this indecorous haste, by the degrading fear of the disclosure of her history; and shunned, and pointed at with the finger of contempt by her compatriots;—here was food for reflection, even to madness! and she writhed in agony under the infliction. Then came the thought, that had she married Lord Heatherfield, in how different a situation might *he* have placed her! and bitter feelings came with the thought; for pride, wounded pride, with all its scorpion stings, pierced afresh her bosom at the recollection of his indifference. No! after all, she had no resource but to marry Prince Romano; fresh arrivals of English would continually expose her to the same danger to which Lady Arden had subjected her; and though she had hitherto escaped being compromised by the slander-loving propensities of her compatriots, she could not hope to continue so fortunate much longer. She felt she was now an outcast from her native land, and on the point of forging chains that would ever keep her from it. Tears flowed; but, like all those she had ever shed, they came from no pure source, for in self, self alone, was their spring; and they who have never wept for others, find the tears that selfishness extorts, oppress rather than relieve the bitterness of their feelings.

Hitherto, Lady Walmer had never reflected on her own situation, except with a view of seeking to remedy it; and had never allowed herself to dwell on the conduct that had led to it, except to regret the effects, without repenting the cause. Conscience, that most true friend or reproachful enemy, had hitherto slumbered in her breast; and though she knew not its powers, she dreaded its awaking, and soothed it by all the soporifics that vanity and selfishness could administer. But like the slumbers produced by opiates, from which the wretched patient awakes, his sufferings aggravated, and his nerves more shattered, conscience, though she may remain inert for awhile, at last starts from

her torpor with fearful vigor, never more to sleep; and inflicts those deadly wounds to which religion alone can apply a balm; —happy is the sufferer who knows how to seek it.

It was not until the first dawn of day had beamed on the horizon, that sleep visited the wearied eyelids of Lady Walmer, and when it did, the painful thoughts that had occupied her mind for the last few hours, were again present to her imagination, with all the vividness that dreams sometimes possess. Now she advanced to the hymeneal alter with Lord Walmer, surrounded by approving friends, her heart filled with joyful anticipations of the future, and content with the present; all the affection she had felt, or fancied she felt for Lord Walmer, when she bestowed her hand on him, was once more revived; and the indifference afterwards experienced towards the husband of some years, formed no part of her recollection of the lover and bridegroom of that day. Free from sin or shame, admired, beloved, and cherished, with buoyant spirits and footsteps light as air, she fancied herself led from the altar, to the splendid equipage that awaited her. She felt the pressure of Lord Walmer's hand, affectionately returned it—and awoke—to find it all a dream; and to remember, with bitterness of heart, that that hand which hers, in sleep, seemed to press a moment before, was mouldering in an untimely grave, in that native land from which she was an exile.

Who has not felt the bitterness of awaking from dreams, which have given back happiness, that never again can be ours? when dear, familiar voices, hushed in the silence of death, have again sounded in our ears, and lips, that are now mouldering in the grave, have again smiled on, and blessed us. But when remorse, that never-dying worm, which preys upon the heart, is added to grief, then, indeed, is the bitterness complete; and this was the pang that the rich, the beautiful, and still youthful Lady Walmer felt, as she groaned aloud, and pressed her hand in agony to her burning brow, to mitigate its throbbings. Yet, in a few hours, she was to become a bride;—again was to approach the altar, and with one whom she could not conceal from herself she did not love, the native of a different country, and the follower of a different religion. But this last objection to their union, unhappily, weighed least heavily of the three on her mind; because, hitherto, though professing a faith, her actions, and, alas! her thoughts, were little in harmony with its divine precepts.

While in this tone of mind, the Prince Romano's habits and ideas appeared to her so dissimilar to those to which she had once been accustomed, that she shrank back affrighted from the anticipation of what her future lot might be with him; and passionately blamed her own precipitancy in consenting to so hasty a marriage. "It was now, however, too late to reflect;" that phrase so often employed by those who feel that they are on the verge of doing something which their reason cannot defend, yet promote its fulfilment, by cheating themselves into a belief that it is too late to avert it.

What would the Milan world say, were she to break off, or postpone the marriage at the moment she had consented to its celebration? The opinion of the Milan world, as that of the London world formerly had been, was now made the arbiter of her actions on this momentous occasion, and to conciliate this imaginary tribunal, she silenced that unerring one within her own breast—the voice of conscience; and again prepared to repeat at the altar, those vows of love that the lips might pronounce, but to which the heart gave no echo.

She arose feverish and unrefreshed, and was submitting to, rather than performing, the duties of the toilette, when a note was brought her from the Principessa Barberini, suggesting the propriety of asking one of the newly arrived English milors to be present at the marriage, that, in the absence of all Lady Walmer's relatives or friends, some one of her compatriots might be a witness to the ceremony.

The note fell from the trembling hands of Lady Walmer, and shame dyed her cheeks as she thought of the inevitable consequences of a compliance with the proposal of the Principessa.

She wrote a hurried note to say, that by no means would she consent to having any English person at the marriage; and then prepared herself with all possible haste for the ceremony.

Every moment seemed an hour to her while she anxiously waited the coming of the Prince Romano. Something she felt might yet prevent the marriage taking place, and then she would be again disgraced—and once more she revolved what would those Milanese associates whom she now denominated the world, think of her?—that world of whose very existence

a few months before, she was utterly ignorant.

The prince came at the appointed hour, and seemed to have all a lover's impatience to lead her to the altar. He observed not the tremulous agitation of his bride, or if he did, attributed it to some feeling more flattering to his vanity than the real one would have been, had it been declared; but both were deceiving and deceived, and though conscious of the deception they were mutually practising, each expected to receive good faith and affection at the hands of the other.

The marriage ceremony, according to the rites of the Romish church, having been performed at the Princess Barberini's, that lady and the bride entered the travelling carriage of the latter, when, followed by that of the bridegroom, in which he was accompanied by the Prince Barberini, the party set out for Florence.

The reflections of the bride were far from being agreeable during the journey, and she anticipated the meeting with the English minister at Florence with painful embarrassment. She had known him in London, on terms of more than ceremonious acquaintance, and his wife had been one of the three hundred friends whom Lady Walmer, as a woman of fashion, counted on her visiting list. Their former intimacy rendered the present meeting very embarrassing, but it was unavoidable, and therefore she must bear it with outward calm, whatever might be her internal feelings.

Arrived at Florence, the minister was written to, and the next day named for the performance of the ceremony.

The princess Romano, as we must now call Lady Walmer, felt the deep blush of shame cover her cheeks, when she was ushered into the presence of the minister, whose cold reception of her, marked his knowledge of her past conduct, and disapproval of the indecent haste with which she had formed her present union, ere yet eight months had elapsed since the discovery of her indiscretion, in England, and only six, since she had become a widow. Her eyes fell beneath the grave glance of his, and it was a relief to her when the ceremony was over, that she might escape from his rebuking presence; but ere she could accomplish this point, the Princess Barberini, who was well acquainted with the English minister and his wife, turned to him and said, she must introduce him to her *dolce amica*, who though his countrywoman, she saw he did not know. Nothing could be more mal-appropos than this proposal. The minister bowed and tried to say something civil, while the bride's confusion and wounded pride became nearly insupportable, as she coldly courtesied to his civilities.

"Where is madame?" continued the Princess Barberini, addressing the minister; "ah! I guess she has not yet left her chamber; I know she is apt to be late of a morning: but may I not go to her, for I shall be *au desespoir*, if I leave Florence without seeing her; and, besides, I am dying to present her my new friend," —taking the bride's hand,—"who is too charming not to be beloved by madame, the moment she is known to her."

Even the minister pitied the visible emotion of the new-made wife at this speech, and he hastened to say, that his wife had been absent from Florence for some days, and would not return for a week.

The bridal party then withdrew; three of them unconscious that the fourth was nearly sunk to the earth by contending feelings of shame and pride; or that the bride and the minister had once been well acquainted.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

"La société est souvent plus sévère pour l'oubli des convenances, que pour l'oubi des devoirs."

We left Lord Heatherfield in Wales, slowly recovering from the effects of his wound, attended by his friend Desbrow, whose unceasing care administered not more to his bodily than to his mental comfort.

The letter having been despatched to Lady Walmer, in which he declared his renunciation of her hand, his mind gradually assumed its natural tone: it seemed as if a fearful load was removed from it, and now the image of Emily reigned alone. Still his love was without hope, for though he knew she still thought of him with tenderness, could he flatter himself into the belief, that after the weakness and vacillation he had betrayed, she would confide her happiness to his keeping, or that she would bestow her hand on one whom she could no longer respect.

Desbrow interposed the shield of his firmness of character, between Heatherfield and his besetting sin, a dread of the opinions of the clique he denominated the

world. Its false principles and conventional tactics still influenced him, and instead of relying on the only safe monitor, conscience, he referred to society for a criterion by which to govern his actions; and hence, found himself in continual opposition with moral duties as well as with his own feelings.

Conversing on this subject one day, he asked Desbrow, if the circle who had witnessed his attentions in former times to Lady Walmer, would not severely censure his desertion of her.

"Why, as to that," replied Desbrow, "the probability is, that long ere this, that circle has ceased to remember the existence of either of you—one-half having pronounced, that to marry her would be to confirm every evil report respecting her, —and the other *vice versâ*. Believe me, they have taken up some newer, and therefore more interesting topic, and will recur to her no more, until some other attachment on her part recalls her to their recollection."

"Spare me, my dear Desbrow," said Heatherfield; "indeed you wrong Lady Walmer; she is incapable of the levity of conduct you attribute to her. Would that I could flatter myself that some other and more fortunate attachment might replace the unhappy one she formed for me; for then, I should have less self-reproach and chagrin than at present."

"It is your vanity, and not your reason, that makes you believe in the stability of the attachment you have inspired," replied Desbrow; "know you not, that 'L'amour-propre est toujours le premier compére de celui qui cherche à le duper.' It is thus, we all cheat ourselves. Lady Walmer will form another attachment—if such selfish preferences can be so called—and will prove to the world, that her despair at your desertion is much less profound, and of shorter duration, than you are at present willing to believe."

Heatherfield replied not, though he was still sceptical; for vanity, no less than a better opinion of Lady Walmer than she deserved, made him believe that her attachment to him was sincere and unchangeable.

The period now drew near, that had been fixed on for Desbrow to seek his promised bride in France; he looked forward to it, with all the impatience of a lover, for his affection for Cecile had increased rather than diminished during their separation, kept alive as it was by a constant correspondence, that made her mind and character still better known to him, and still more admired. He could have wished his friend to accompany him to Paris, but he repressed the desire, because he dreaded that Lady Walmer might come there, and again try to shake his resolution, while to England, he felt certain she would not come, as the fear of meeting former friends, and a presentiment of the treatment she might experience from them, would deter her. The same idea had found a place in the mind of Heatherfield, though he, from delicacy, refrained from expressing it: added to which, he felt a pleasure in remaining in the same country that held Emily, and had a latent hope, that she might learn from the newspapers, those praters of the whereabouts of lords and ladies, that he was *not* on the continent.

Desbrow remained with Heatherfield until the last moment fixed for his departure for France had arrived, and then took an affectionate leave of him, promising that when Cecile had become his wife, he would use all his influence with her, to represent to Lady Emily, Heatherfield's unceasing attachment to her, and disentanglement from Lady Walmer.

"I am persuaded," said Desbrow, "that when Lady Emily knows that no guilt has been either intended, or perpetrated by you, since you first sought her hand; and that hypocrisy is not to be added to the weakness, with which alone you are chargeable, she will regard your conduct in a totally different point of view; and if, by an avoidance of Lady Walmer, you convince the world of the falsity of its conclusions respecting you, her family may be brought to receive you again as her suitor."

There was happiness even in the thought of this; and Heatherfield clung to it, as a ship-wrecked mariner clings to the last spar or rope, that offers him a chance of life.

The solitude in which he found himself after the departure of Desbrow, became every day less irksome; he had now ample time to commune with his own mind; and the emptiness of his past pursuits, and the fallacy of his former modes of reasoning and acting, now stood exposed in their natural colors. No longer in contact with that artificial circle, whose opinions had hitherto governed him, he learned to look on its applause or censure with indifference, and to examine his own motives by the most unerring of all judges,—conscience. He passed his mornings in riding over his estate, examining into the condition of his tenantry, relieving the necessities of the

indigent, and planning such improvements of his castle and grounds, as would give employment to them. He found much to disapprove, as the late lord had not for many years visited his property in Wales, and the resident agent was, by age and personal infirmities, prevented from performing the arduous duties of his situation.

Hence, many abuses had crept in, under the management of the subaltern to whom the trust was confided; and Heatherfield set about remedying them, with a zeal directed by prudence and judgment. His evenings were given up to reading, for which he found his passion daily increase; but often was the volume laid down, while his thoughts dwelt on Emily, and he would form bright visions of the future, in which she was the presiding goddess who was to realize them. Then, would come the fearful recollection of her delicate health, and she would appear to his mental eye as he had last seen her, with faded cheeks and wasted form, but more lovely in *his* sight, than when health's brightest roses bloomed on her face, and her rounded contour might have served as a model for the graces. It seemed to him as if he had never loved her till now; and the consciousness of his own unworthiness, made him doubly anxious to become all that could render him more deserving the treasure which he aspired to possess. So much had his passion for Emily increased since he had seen her at the inn, that he no longer dared to contemplate the possibility of not calling her his; and yet the hope of such happiness was too often chilled by a fear which is ever inseparable from true love, but to which, in his peculiar situation, he had but too much cause to give way. He might now be said to indulge in the luxury of solitude, and he found its charms grow upon him every day. Reading and reflection strengthened the tone of his mind; and a self-examination, to which he accustomed himself, taught him to correct the defects that had hitherto sullied his character.

The Lord Heatherfield of Wales was as unlike the Arlington of a few months before, as if they had not been the same person. No longer influenced by the false maxims of a conventional state of society, which teaches not to correct, but to conceal vices, he every day became more worthy of the affection of her who had loved him, not for the qualities he possessed, but for those for which her own goodness and purity of mind had led her to give him credit. The fame of his steadiness, generosity and charity, was soon spread through his neighborhood, and gained him the respect and good-will of all. He felt that his presence was of essential value to his dependents, and that a personal acquaintance had drawn closer the bonds which united them. While dispensing happiness, and encouraging industry and good conduct, he often reflected how different his fate might have been, as an exile in a foreign land, shrinking from his countrymen, and pointed at as the husband of one he could not love, and whose conduct had forfeited his respect.

But while rejoicing in his escape from this ignoble thraldom, and its miserable consequences, he thought, with deep regret, of the evils Lady Walmer's ill-starred attachment to him had entailed on her. With the self-deception natural even to the least vain, he magnified the depth of this attachment, until he trembled for its probable results on her health and peace of mind; and while she thought only of amusing herself, or of recovering that station in society in a foreign land which she had lost in her own, he pictured her to himself as pining in solitude, the barbed arrow of disappointed affection rankling in her breast, until he felt the liveliest pity for her supposed sufferings, though a warmer feeling he could not indulge towards her, Lady Emily Vavasour being the sole occupant of his *heart*.

Having received a letter, announcing the death of his steward at Heatherfield Castle, he found himself compelled to quit his solitude in Wales, which he left with a regret that, he little fancied, on arriving there, he should ever have experienced on quitting it. He left it, too, followed by the regrets and good wishes of all, for his conduct during his stay there had "bought golden opinions from all sorts of men." The poor blessed him, the rich respected him, and all agreed in thinking they had indeed found a friend in their new landlord, who would judge with his own eyes, instead of seeing only through the interested and prejudiced ones of some griping steward.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

"La société est appuyée sur de fausses bases, qui s'écroulent chaque jour d'une manière sensible. L'égoisme et la cupidité sont les ressorts secrets de toutes les actions; ils règnent dans les emplois, dans le commerce, dans les familles; chacune d'elles a resserré son cercle en disant: 'Hors d'ici, que m'importe.' Aussi, plus de lien entre les individus, plus d'enthousiasme pour le bonheur de la société, plus de morale enfin; car aimer c'est se dévouer pour les autres. Hors de là, il n'y a plus de félicité publique à espérer."

The fortune bequeathed to Cecile de Bethune, by Lord Ayrshire, made a considerable change in the position of that young lady; though under age, she was entitled to receive the interest of it, until she married, or reached her twenty-first year; and this acquisition of wealth not only gave the means of present comfort, but suggested to the minds of the Comte de Bethune, and his oracle, the Duchesse de Montcalm, the advantage to be derived from retaining the heiress and her heritage in their power as long as possible; or, if marry she must, of bestowing her hand and fortune on some Frenchman of high birth, with whom she would be fixed in France, and from whose residence in their own country her family would derive a vast accession of importance.

The Comte de Bethune had never cordially approved the projected marriage of his daughter with Desbrow, but his own poverty, and the wealth of the suitor, had silenced his objections. Indeed, he hardly dared to avow to the friends who had acted like the tenderest parents to her, that his principal objection was, that Desbrow was an Englishman—yet so it was. But, in addition to this he saw, notwithstanding Desbrow's forbearance on political subjects, enough to convince him that he was what he, the Comte, most detested on earth, a Liberal—a character he looked on with much the same horror with which sober-minded people regard a Radical. Desbrow had never assented to his opinions, though he forbore to oppose them, and the Comte, who thought that all who were not with, were against him, looked on him as an enemy. Now, that Cecile was rich, and that her fortune would enable them to resume a little of the former splendor of the family, it became the first wish of her heart to prevent the marriage; and, judging of his daughter's feelings by his own, he concluded that her attachment to Desbrow was not of so exclusive a nature as to preclude her happiness, were the marriage to be broken off. People with unfeeling hearts, and frivolous minds, frequently contemplate, or commit actions, from which the greatest unhappiness may result, not from any malice in their natures, but because they are too apt to judge of the feelings of others, by their own. The Comte de Bethune would have shrunk from the idea of wounding the peace of his daughter, could he have formed a notion of the depth or sincerity of her attachment to Desbrow; but being incapable of any deep sentiment of affection himself, he had no clue by which he could discover hers; and possessing himself an obstinate disposition, he was more disposed to attribute her attachment to her affianced husband to obstinacy, of which he knew much, than to love, of which he knew—nothing. He, therefore, looked at his dislike to the projected marriage, and her adherence to it, as a cause of obstinacy *versus* obstinacy, in which he wished to gain the verdict. Various were the consultations between him and the Duchesse de Montcalm on the subject; the latter suggested the plan of presenting to Cecile some of the innumerable Dues, Marquises, Comtes, Viscounts, and Barons, who wanted, *not* a wife, but a marriage portion, and to whom that of Cecile would be an irresistible temptation.

"It is quite impossible," said la Duchesse, "that Cecile can be such a simpleton as to prefer this Englishman, whom you represent to me as being *gauche*, and *brusque*, to any of our young men of fashion; though, I confess, those whom I have hitherto thrown in her way, have not seemed to make a favorable impression on her. But the truth is, she is *un peu originale*, a fault common to all who have been brought up in barbarous England; and though every means ought to be tried to bring her to reason, I fear we shall never make any thing of her."

The Comte had a presentiment of the same sort; for though Cecile's conduct was as dutiful and respectful as possible, he saw that she had a natural firmness of character, or obstinacy, as he termed it, which led her to adhere to any resolution once formed; and he had also observed, that she pertinaciously put aside any insinuations thrown out against Desbrow, (for he had tried this plan,) and invariably referred to England as her future home.

The Comte de Bethune increased his establishment on his daughter's acquisition of fortune—a young Parisian femme de chambre was provided for Cecile, and two laquais, and an aid in the cuisine, were added to the menage: while a pair of fresh, high stepping horses, and a new

carriage, replaced the former equipage. All was bustle and gaiety in the hotel—a gaiety that ill accorded with the grief Cecile felt for the death of Lord Ayrshire, which opened afresh the ill-healed wounds so recently occasioned by the loss of his wife. The total want of sympathy between her father and self on this subject was destructive to that feeling of affection which she wished, and tried to encourage for him. Often did she accuse herself of an unnatural and reprehensible coldness towards her only parent, and resolve to force herself to feel towards him as she ought; but the effort was always chilled by some display of prejudices against her adopted country, or some fresh proof of selfishness, that banished every thing like affection, leaving only a sense of duty to supply its place.

Cecile could neither be persuaded nor forced to leave the seclusion of the hotel, during the first few weeks after the death of Lord Ayrshire. In vain, the Duchesse de Montclam assailed her by turns, with intreaties and sarcasms: in vain, her father attempted to interpose his authority; she was not to be moved. Precedents of *les usages de Paris* were quoted to her without number, all "*les covenances*" were dwelt on, and how long people were expected to feel, or be *supposed* to feel grief, was accurately computed. And it was pronounced that as, at the end of six weeks, after the death of a parent, a son or daughter might go into the gayest society, without any imputation being cast upon their filial, or want of filial, affection; for a less degree of consanguinity, as many days' seclusion would be quite sufficient. Le Livre de Deuil, sent from the mercer's, had not specified the mourning for the precise case in question, but as the bombasine could not be worn for so distant a relative, and this article serves as a point of etiquette in the toilette, that always regulates Parisian grief, it was absurd to shut oneself up, and all Paris would think it affectation and *mauvais goût*, and say it was *l'exaggeration Anglaise*, which was *si mauvais ton*. All this reasoning, if reasoning it might be called, failed to conquer Cecile's determination to seclude herself during the first weeks of her loss; and her deep and uncontrollable regret for her dear departed friend, Lord Ayrshire, was borne in solitude, and solaced by religion. This excellent man was as bitterly wept by her, in the daughter's mourning—which, in spite of all the Duchesse de Montcalm's and her father's angry representations, she had persevered in wearing for him—as was ever parent by the fondest child. Indeed, all that Cecile had as yet experienced of her real parent, made her but the more deeply mourn for the *dead*, who had, from her infancy, so fondly and ably supplied the place of the living; and she turned with a feeling, as nearly allied to anger as her gentle nature and sense of duty would admit, from the heartless arguments and frivolous consolations that were held out to her.

It was after a vain effort to induce her to go to a *soirée*, at the Duchesse de Montcalm's, that her father, shrugging up his shoulders—his usual mode of displaying his displeasure—emphatically remarked that she was "*une veritable Anglaise*, and that the English had no philosophy."

"When I lost your mother," he continued, "do you suppose that I shut myself up to weep? What could I have gained by such a silly proceeding? Sore eyes, a bad head-ache, and a red nose, three things of which all people must have a horror. Would the entailment of three such inflictions on myself have brought back the Comtesse de Bethune, or availed her aught in the mansions of the blessed? Certainly not: so with the philosophy that distinguishes my countrymen, I triumphed over my grief, and bore it not only as a man, but as a—Frenchman. You look surprised," (which poor Cecile certainly did,) "but this is only one of many proofs which I can give you, of my strength of character and philosophy. I remember, when writing to your friend Lady Ayrshire, all the particulars of Madame de Bethune's death, and having to repeat her dying words, bequeathing you to the charge of her cousin, my philosophy became for a moment in danger; I felt a painful sensation in my throat, and a moisture springing to my eyes, but I reflected on the inevitable consequences of an indulgence of this impulse; the sore eyes, head-ache, and, above all, the red nose, recurred to my memory, and I swallowed my chagrin and completed my letter, without having omitted a single particularity, or shed a single tear. On reading it over, it occurred to me that your friends who were much too English to comprehend my strength of mind and philosophy, might form an injurious opinion of my conjugal feelings, were I not to give some indication of grief more than mere words, so I dipped my fingers into a glass of water, and sprinkled it over the parts of the letter the most touching, which gave

it the appearance of having been bedewed by my tears. By these means," added the Count, at once proudly and self-complacently, "I satisfied your friends of my grief, and saved myself from the infirmities of which I have such a dread."

Cecile sat listening to this disclosure with equal astonishment and disgust, but the satisfaction of the narrator was so great that he attributed her silence to respectful admiration; and left her, as he thought, impressed with a high opinion of his philosophy, for which high sounding title she felt disposed to substitute frivolity. The two are often mistaken for each other in France, and if the effects are the same, (inducing *insouciance*,) we must let them choose the term, the most agreeable to that ruling passion in French natures, *l'amour-propre*.

The Comte de Bethune, finding that he could not persuade his daughter to go into society during the first week of her recent loss, betook himself to his former routine of life, which had been interrupted by his acting as *chaperon* to her. He now found himself received on very different terms in the circles in which he presented himself. The father of a rich young heiress was sure to be feted on all sides, because every family had a son, brother, nephew, or cousin, to whom the fortune of Mademoiselle de Bethune would be a very desireable acquisition. In proportion to the respectful consideration with which he found himself treated, became his desire to insure a continuance of it; and each day rendered him more anxious to break off the marriage of his daughter, on which he knew it depended.

The young men at Paris, who had hitherto treated him with that nonchalance which marks their manner towards those from whom they have nothing to expect, now flocked round him with polite assiduities and respectful deference, while he looked on them with proud complacency, neither too much encouraging nor repelling their attentions.

While the Comte de Bethune was enjoying his lately acquired consideration abroad, his amiable and lovely daughter was passing her hours in solitude at home. By pecuniary liberality to Madame de la Rue, judiciously and delicately administered, she had secured herself from the irksome society of that lady, who was well satisfied to remain in her chamber with her Coco and Bijou, and the last *Livre de Modes*, during the hours she was supposed to be with Mademoiselle de Bethune. At first, she could not comprehend the love of solitude of Cecile, a passion which is of such rare occurrence in France, that it draws on the person who indulges it, as many suspicions as the evil propensities of the suspectors suggest.

But a few weeks daily intercourse with Cecile had taught even the frivolous and gossiping Madame de la Rue, that the amiable girl had nothing to conceal; and, propitiated by her generosity, she thought it hard, as she observed, that if Mademoiselle wished to read, draw, practise her music, or work, *alone*, instead of in her company, she might not be permitted to do so: *chacun a son goût*, Mademoiselle liked solitude, which *she* thought the most *triste* thing on earth, except the presence of that *mechante* Madame le Moine, and never wished to be separated from her *cher* Coco and Bijou, who were all the world to her. To be sure, Mademoiselle, it must be owned, was *un peu originale mais*, she was very amiable and generous —generous as a queen,—and therefore *she* should not interrupt her comfort.

The fortune left by Lord Ayrshire to Cecile, was magnified, by rumor, into thrice its actual amount; and as La Duchesse de Montcalm and the Comte de Bethune acquired additional importance from the belief of the immense wealth of the *protégée* of the one, and the daughter of the other, they were unwilling to destroy the illusion of the Parisians. No sooner had Cecile once more resumed her visits to the Hotel de Montcalm, than the *soirées* of the Duchesse became the resort of all the young men of fashion at Paris, and Cecile the avowed object of their admiration and attention.

Those who, previously to her acquisition of fortune, had scarcely deigned to notice her, or had noticed her, but to comment on her *mise à l'Anglaise*, and want of *tournure*, now discovered in her a thousand charms. How many fresh extravagances were entered into by her suitors, on the faith of her thousands, and tens of thousands! each declared himself an Anglomane, on discovering her attachment to her adopted country; and English horses and grooms rose cent. per cent., such was the demand for them, in order to "'witch Cecile's heart by noble horsemanship." That courage, peculiar to Frenchmen, was never more exemplified than in the present case, for many a youth risked his neck on unmanageable horses to win her favor. Each aspirant made certain of success, and wagers were entered down in the clubs

at Paris, to a large amount, which displayed as much confidence in the powers of captivation of the candidates for her fortune, as ignorance of the character and feelings of her by whose hand it was to be acquired. Fresh credits were given by the horse-dealers, jewellers, tailors, and other trades-people, through whose artful aid, a dandy, an exquisite, or by whatever name these ephemera choose to designate themselves, is fitted to play his part. Good looks, and an air *distingué* with an ancient name, could command credit *ad libitum;* while the reverses of these were sent away with cold refusals.

Little did Cecile imagine that she was the subject of conversation and speculation in horse dealers' yards, and jewellers' and tailors' shops; and equally little did she imagine, that each of the crowd of butterflies who surrounded her, and on whom she deigned not even to bestow a passing thought, considered himself almost sure of winning her. She observed with surprise the alteration in their manners towards her, and her father; but she paid so little attention to them, that she soon ceased to remember it.

A pure-minded and well-principled young woman, whose affections are engaged, is often unconscious of the admiration she excites, or if she discerns it, derives but little pleasure from her discovery. In the present instance, however. Cecile was not to be cheated into a belief, that the attentions she was paid were the results of her personal attractions; and therefore, she received them with a distant politeness, that would have chilled an Englishman, but which discouraged not the more confident and volatile Frenchman.

The letters from Desbrow, which were long and frequent, were the sole consolation of Cecile in the uncongenial circle into which she had been thrown; and finding in that circle no creature with whom she could sympathise, her whole soul opened to the lover, whose letters breathed, not only the most devoted attachment, but evinced a similarity of thought and feeling with her own, that still more strongly cemented the ties of affection between them. Her brother she had not yet seen: he was in a distant province with his regiment, which was expected to arrive shortly in Paris, and she looked forward with anxious impatience to meeting him, who was now the sole member of her family from whom she expected sympathy, or freedom from national prejudice.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Aye get thee home again! you islanders
Live under such good laws, so mild a sway,
That you are no more fit to dwell abroad
Than is a doting mother's favorite to endure
His first school hardships."

Lord and Lady Vavasour, finding that the health of Lady Emily made such slow progress towards amendment, and judging that her mind was preying on the beautiful but too frail temple that enshrined it, proposed to her to visit the south of France for change of air and scene, and to remain a few weeks at Paris to enjoy the society of her friend Mademoiselle de Bethune. Nothing could be devised more agreeable to Lady Emily than this plan; and the pleasure with which she acceded to it, induced her parents to put it into execution soon after it was formed. Apartments were secured for them at the Hotel de Breteuil, Rue de Rivoli; and the morning after their arrival, a note from Lady Emily prepared Cecile for the happiness of seeing her.

The altered looks of her friend deeply shocked and grieved the sensitive heart of the affectionate Cecile; and to the earnest request that they might pass as much of their time together as possible, she yielded a ready assent, though she saw her father's brow clouded by dissatisfaction, and anticipated some objections on his part, to the proposed daily intercourse.

Her anticipations were not falsified; for no sooner did he find himself alone with her, than he told her that he regretted that she had pledged herself to such an unnecessary intimacy, and that he hoped she would break it off gradually. "You must remember, before every other consideration," said the Comte, "that you are French; and that being the daughter of an *émigré*, any extraordinary intimacy with the English, will excite disagreeable observations among our compatriots, and subject us to animadversions in a certain high quarter. The English come here, as if to remind us of their ostentatious services, in our days of adversity in their country. The restoration, unhappily, has not, in restoring our rank, given us back the fortunes to support it with suitable dignity; and as we cannot repay their hospitality in a similar style, I confess that all intercourse with them is humiliating and disagreeable to me."

This mode of feeling obligations was so new to the guileless Cecile, that she lis-

tened with an astonishment nearly equal to the disgust which it excited in her mind. Now was explained to her that enigma which had frequently puzzled her since her arrival in France, of seeing the English of distinction so coldly received in the circles of the aristocracy of *l'ancien régime* at Paris. She felt however the necessity of being candid and explicit with her father on this subject; and declared to him, that she could not break off her intimacy with her friend, at the very moment that, owing to the delicacy of her health, she most required her kindness and attention, without incurring the odious suspicion of ingratitude, and forfeiting her own self-esteem.

There was something so decided, though respectful, in the tone and manner of Cecile, that her father felt it would be treading on dangerous ground to risk a command, where an intreaty had failed to produce the desired effect. But, when his daughter stated, that while remembering that she was of French origin, she must not forget, that to England, and English kindness, she owed education, years of affectionate kindness, and a large fortune, less valuable in itself than as a proof of the affection of the generous friend who bequeathed it; also, that being affianced to an Englishman, her life would be spent in his country, and therefore she must not be influenced by the prejudices of France, the Comte could hardly restrain his anger, though he felt that any display of it would be as unavailing as injudicious. He left the salon lest he should betray his emotions, and sought in solitude, to recover his self-possession.

At an early hour the next day, the carriage conveyed Cecile, attended by Madame de la Rue, to the Hotel de Breteuil; and Lady Vavasour, having promised to conduct Mademoiselle to the Hotel de Bethune *la dame de compagnie* returned alone, leaving Cecile to enjoy a tête-à-tête with her young friend, to which both eagerly looked forward. How much had they to communicate! Cecile repressed the expression of the hopes that animated her, now that the period fixed for her marriage drew so near, because she would not pain the feelings of her gentle friend, whose hopes, when to all appearance equally near completion, had been so cruelly blighted. But Emily's nature was too generous, too disinterested, to be pained by the contrast of her friend's prospects with her own, nay, she was cheered by them, and offered to stay in Paris to accompany her to the altar, saying she knew she should feel happier when the happiness of her friend was secured. Every thought, every feeling, of the two pure-minded and amiable girls, were laid open to each other; and a faint blush played on the cheek of Emily, and a brighter ray sparkled in her eye, when Cecile told her, that Lord Heatherfield, nearly recovered from the effects of his duel, was in England, and *alone*. A whole volume was comprised in the last sentence; but when to it was added the information conveyed to Cecile by Desbrow, that Heatherfield still fondly loved, and had never ceased to love her, the amiable and sensitive girl wept tears, in which, for the first time for many months, more of pleasure than of pain was mingled.

"Do not think me weak, dearest Cecile," said Emily, "nor think I weep at the assurance that *he* still loves me; for, believe me, that, were he *not alone*, that assurance would give me pain, as he is too dear to me to permit my wishing him to feel a passion that must make him wretched. I weep, because his *solitary* residence in England proves to me, that, though weak and erring, he has not been the guilty creature the world would fain represent him to be; for I know that if he had been the seducer of the unhappy Lady Walmer, he would have offered her the *only* reparation in his power, and would not now be *alone*, in England. It is dreadful, Cecile, to have to weep in secret over the guilt of those we have loved, and though I may never again see Lord Heatherfield, it is comparative happiness to what I have suffered, to learn that he is not steeped in guilt and shame, and to feel that I need not blush that I have loved him."

The health of Lady Emily began to improve from the date of this conversation: the society of her friend conveyed a balm to her heart, and Lord and Lady Vavasour marked the renovation in her looks and spirits with grateful delight.

Lord and Lady Scamper soon found their way to the Hotel de Breteuil, the former, full of grievances and discontent, and the latter, in raptures with Paris, and every thing Parisian.

"I'm sorry you're come to this cursed place," was Lord Scamper's first ejaculation, while heartily shaking the hand of Lord Vavasour; "make up your mind to be fleeced; they won't leave you a guinea, for it is cheat! cheat! from the marquis, with all his decorations, down to the shopkeeper, with his contortions and extor-

tions. I've found them out, a little too late—but better late than never, I say; for though they have done me out of many hundreds, they sha'nt have a single guinea from me again; I keep a sharp look out on them, *now*, I can tell you."

While he was making this boast of his dearly purchased sagacity to Lord Vavasour, accompanied by sundry knowing winks and shrugs, Lady Scamper was detailing the various *agrémens* of Paris to Lady Vavasour.

"It is, indeed, a delightful place—society established on such an agreeable footing."

Here, Lord Scamper overheard her; and, turning round, repeated the words, "Agreeable footing, indeed; I like that—devilish agreeable! They come and dine with you as often as you choose to ask them; but as to letting you have a dinner in return, they never dream of it. A soirée at which they all jabber their confoundod lingo together, and give you weak black tea, and *l'eau sucré*, is all I have ever got out of them: and this is what Lady Scamper calls society on an 'agreeable footing!' Beware of their men milliners, Lady Vavasour. What do you think of three and four hundred francs for a *chapeau à plume*, as they call a bonnet with feathers? I know some people that they have so well plumed,"—casting a sly look at his wife, "that if a second year's pin-money had not been advanced, I can pretty well guess what must have happened."

Lady Scamper gave a look of mingled shame and anger at her lord, who replied to it, "It's no use your giving me your angry looks; you know it's all true, and what's more, you told me you never would buy any more of their jim cracks; and yet this morning, I caught the *laquais de place* smuggling up two or three band-boxes to your room.—Mind you don't go and play at the club, Lord Vavasour," continued Lord Scamper; "they'll do you to a moral certainty, if you neglect my advice. You may play a rubber at the ambassador's—that is to say, if you can *parley vous* it—for all depends on that. Lady Scamper would insist on my learning French; and I have had a master every morning—a sad dirty beast, who smelt of cigars—but I could make nothing of him, for, as he did not comprehend two words of English, nor I one of French, we were not likely to come to an understanding. I packed him off, and began teaching myself with a dictionary, of which I make a much better hand, and I can now ask for every thing I want, without an interpreter. To be sure, I get into some scrapes, and half the time they keep saying, '*Pardonne*,' '*Plait-il*,' but I must say they are much more civil than the English are; for make what mistake you will, they never laugh in your face. Lady Scamper would make me go the other night to the Duchesse de Montfort's; and as I knew I should be asked to play at some of their round games, I got myself up with a few phrases, which I strung together out of the dictionary, and put in my waistcoat pocket. We played, and I won the pool; so I looked at my little vocabulary, and wishing to get the counters I exclaimed, 'Le gibier est à moi, donnez moi le poisson!" They could not make out what I meant, turned up their eyes, shrugged their shoulders, and repeated '*Pardonne!*' and '*Plaitil!*' until I was getting into a passion; when Sir Thomas Wilman came up, and demanded what I meant? Mean, said I, why I mean, to be sure, that the game is mine; give me the fish, which I've told them ten times in good French, but they pretend not to understand me. Now, I ask you, Lord Vavasour, is not the French for game, *gibier*, and for fish, *poisson?* therefore I was right."

Lady Scamper looked horrified at her obtuse lord's mistakes, while Lord and Lady Vavasour could with difficulty restrain their risible faculties within due bounds; and Lady Emily and Cecile, who were in the recess of the window, could not resist laughing, a transgression of decorum which their position luckily prevented from being observed in the salon.

"There is no sport going on, in this country," resumed Lord Scamper; "unless one dignifies with that name, their races in the *Champ de Mars*, which are the most complete humbug I ever saw. Only fancy a race course, where the horses run on a hard gravel road, enough to shake them to pieces, while the spectators are on the grass. Then, they are started by a fellow in a gold-laced coat and hat, enough to frighten any horse, who cries out '*Partez!*' and away they go. Some of the most knowing of the French get English jockeys, and, would you believe it, that when the spectators and bettors saw them keeping in their horses, in order to make play at the last, the spooneys imagined that, because they were last in the beginning, they must lose in the end; and so, backed those that were first, and, of course, were done out of their money. Ever since then, they have fancied the horse or horses who are last, *must* win, being to-

tally unable to distinguish the difference between a fresh horse kept in, or a tired one who cannot advance; so they back the latter, regularly expecting up to the last minute that they will stride out, and pass those in advance. When they find they have lost, they are furious; such oaths, such exclamations follow, and all for a few hundred francs.

"They have no Newmarket, no provincial races; no hunting, except a sort of humbug ceremony, which they call by that name, got up for the royal family and their courtiers, which is as little like the real thing as can be well imagined. Cock fighting they never heard of: only think of that! a pretty sort of a country, indeed, where cock fighting is unknown: in short, they are a century behind us in civilisation; and England—England is the only country where a man can spend his money or his time to his satisfaction. The only thing in the shape of sport I have seen, was a quarrel between two old Frenchwomen; they had a good deal of pluck, and I might have won something by them, if I had had any one to bet with, but the old ones, when I tapped them on the back to encourage them, turned their anger on me, and I was forced to retreat. As to their dinners, hang me, if I have had a passable one since I have been in the country—a morsel of plain, wholesome, nutritious food, it is impossible to get; their mutton is tough, spongy, and flabby; their beef gives me the notion of having been fed on glue; and their eternal *poulards*, and *dindes*, *aux truffes*, as unmasticable to the teeth as they are indigestible to the stomach, I am sick of seeing. Then their vegetables, tasting of nutmeg and gravy, have lost all their original flavor; and their fish is so disguised by sauces, that it resembles neither fish nor flesh. In short, my days pass without amusement, and when the dinner hour comes, which in England is always the most agreeable of the twenty-four, I find a repast which may do for those who, like Lady Scamper, are partial to kickshaws, but which disgusts me. Their wines, too, are abominable to my taste: their claret is poor weak stuff, no more to be compared to the good strong wine they send us to England, than if it came not from the same grape. I am positively starved; and were it not for a dinner once now and then at our ambassador's, where I can get a bit of good English mutton, or venison, I could not stand it. And what an absurd custom they have, of the men leaving the dining-room with the women, and so losing the most agreeable part of the evening; for, certainly, when the ladies retire, and that we draw, socially together, round the table, we may be said really to enjoy ourselves. Hang me, if ever I shall adopt this plan in my house, though Lady Scamper says it is the most rational; as if, when a set of men are talking together over their wine, without having to pay compliments and listen to the chit-chat of the women, there is not more chance of rational conversation. In the country, the day's hunting, or shooting, furnishes a never-failing topic of interest, and in London, politics do the same; but here, there is nothing to talk of, but the opera or the spectacle. No! I repeat, England is the only place for a sensible man to live in, and once I get back, hang me, if ever I cross the water again!"

A declaration which made poor Lady Scamper look quite panic stricken; dreading, however, the continuance of the enumeration of his discontents, after repeated sighs, she at length persuaded him to finish their visit.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

"Le respect est une barrière qui protége autant un père et une mère qu'un enfant: elle évite à ceux-ci des chagrins, a celui-la des remords."

At this period, the brother of Cecile arrived at Paris, with his regiment, and she hailed his presence with delight. He had all the warmth of manner, and vivacity of his countrymen, with a good breeding and polish, not often to be found in the young men of modern France. His personal beauty was so striking that, united to such agreeable manners, Cecile ceased to wonder that her father was so fond and proud of such a son. His arrival dispensed pleasure through all the household; the old porter sent forth the fumes from his cigar with increased velocity, brushed the court-yard with unusual exactitude, and assumed an air of fresh importance every time his young master passed through it. The coachman and his assistant put the stable and its inmates into better order. The *cuisinier* gave some of his most *recherchés plats*, and Madame le Moine donned her newest bonnet, with ribbons *à la jardiniére*, to present herself before *cher* Monsieur Auguste, every time he passed through the vestibule.

Auguste was, and most deservedly, a

general favorite in the hotel; his gaiety, frankness, and generosity had won the hearts of all; he had a smile, a kind word, or a playful sally, for each of the members of the establishment, and his affectionate attention to his father and sister was unceasing. He could not take up his residence in the Hotel de Bethune, as he was compelled to remain with his regiment at the other side of Paris; but every moment that he could snatch from his military duties was devoted to his family. His *petite sœur*, as he called Cecile, he soon learned to love with all the warmth of his nature: her gentleness, yet decision of character, charmed him, and her power of not only supporting solitude, but of enjoying it, and of submitting to the various *désagrémens* of her *entourage*, excited alike his wonder and esteem. He had not been two days in Paris, ere Cecile feeling all her sisterly affection drawn into animation towards him, had written to Desbrow a glowing description of his mental and personal qualities; adding her conviction that her brother could not fail to win his friendship. All her natural tenderness, which had been chilled by the selfishness, coldness of heart, and national prejudices of her father, now expanded towards her brother. She wondered how she had hitherto known happiness apart from him, and felt as if she owed him a reparation for having so long lived forgetful of his claims on her affection, or only remembering them from a sense of duty. Ever since her acquisition of fortune, she had determined on securing the comfort of her father, by settling half the interest of it on him for his life, and fixing the other half on Auguste, the whole to descend to the latter, on the death of the Comte de Bethune. She knew Desbrow too well to doubt for a moment his ready and perfect acquiescence in this project. He chose me for myself, thought Cecile, when I was without fortune, and I have no feeling of pride to make me shrink from going to him as a portionless bride. She wrote her intentions to Desbrow, who was gratified by this new proof of her confidence in his affection and generosity, and she became in consequence doubly dear to him. It was while Cecile was planning the future comfort and independence of her father, and that her lover was not only yielding a ready assent to her relinquishment of fortune, but commending her for it, that that father, incapable of appreciating her, or her lover, was encouraging round her a host of aspirants to her hand, and revolving every possible means of breaking off her marriage with Desbrow.

No sooner had her brother arrived, than the Comte de Bethune endeavored to enlist him in his plans: he represented that the large fortune which his daughter had so unexpectedly inherited, entirely changed her position, and his intentions. While she was portionless, he said, he did not consider himself justified in refusing his consent to an alliance, which the wealth and respectability of Mr. Desbrow rendered unexceptionable, more especially as Lord and Lady Ayrshire had highly approved the intended union, and that Cecile appeared to be attached to him.

"This last is the most essential reason of all for consenting to it," said Auguste, with a vivacity that mortified the Comte: "and does not my sister still feel this attachment?"

"The attachments of persons of her age," replied the father, "are rarely remarkable for their stability."

"You mistake my sister," said Auguste, "if you calculate on the instability of hers, and we have no right to do her this injustice, until we have something more conclusive than a hypothetical opinion, formed on the general inconsistency attributed to her sex. Mr. Desbrow was considered a suitable husband for her, when she was without fortune; and his choice of her under such circumstances proves the disinterestedness of his affection—a proof, my dear father, that no future suitor can give. Lord and Lady Ayrshire, who were parents to her—parents in the best sense of the term—wished this marriage to take place; and do you think that Lord Ayrshire would have bequeathed Cecile a fortune, if he had thought that it would have been the means of breaking off the union he desired?"

"You do not take into consideration," said the Comte de Bethune, "the mortification it must be to me, to see my daughter fixed for life in England, when her fortune might secure her one of the noblest marriages in France."

"Her *fortune* certainly might," replied Auguste; "but is Cecile a person to be happy in the marriage, which she must owe *wholly* to her fortune—nay, my father, is she a person to be happy with a Frenchman?"

"What do I hear?" said the father, turning red with anger; "does a son of mine, think an Englishman more likely to insure the happiness of my daughter than a Frenchman?"

"You forget," said Auguste, "that Cecile, though born in France, has been educated in England, has imbibed all the feelings and opinions peculiar to that country, and it is as impossible for her steady and solid character to descend to the *légèreté* of one of our young countrymen, as it would be for one of them to ascend to hers. Both would be miserable—but no, *she* alone would be miserable, for few of *us* can be made unhappy, though we can render others so. I repeat, my dear father, that it appears to me that the honor of my sister, as far as regards generosity, would be impeachable, were she to refuse a man because she is rich, whom she consented to marry when all the advantages of wealth were on his side."

The old Comte looked angry and unconvinced at the reasoning of his son; but he was too well aware of the high feelings of that son, to betray to him how deeply he was influenced by selfish views, in his desire of breaking off the intended marriage, and Auguste was too noble-minded to harbor a suspicion of them.

The time now approached rapidly, when Desbrow might be expected at Paris to claim his bride, and her father saw it arrive with ill-disguised discontent. To attempt to force the affections, or at least the duty, of Cecile, aided as she now was by the presence of her brother, who seemed most unaccountably, as the father considered, disposed to encourage, rather than protract the marriage, would be useless; and, therefore, he determined to let things take their course.

"And so, *ma chere petite sœur*," said Auguste, "you only come to France to teach us to love you, and make us feel the pain of losing you. You will marry, then, this Englishman, who will take you to his cold, ceremonious country, away from ——, la belle France, the gay Hotel de Bethune, Mesdames de la Rue and Le Moine, les chers Coco and Bijou, and all the other *agrémens* of your *entourage*."

"I only grieve, my dear brother," replied Cecile, "that I shall leave you—and my father."

"Well remembered," said Auguste, tapping her cheek; "but I fear, that *notre pauvre père, pauvre, helas!* in more than one sense of the word, has made you suffer too much from his national prejudices to let you love him much. I see you are going to make a pretty and dutiful speech, but *n'importe, entre nous deux*, we may, we ought to be candid. I, too, *ma chere petite sœur*, have often had to regret them, for I am more than half English in my heart. You know that I am three years your senior, a *difference* that entitles me to your respect, so mind you treat me with proper deference;—but, to be serious, those three years of seniority gave me the happiness of knowing our dear sainted mother; my first words were lisped in her native tongue, and I have continued to cultivate it, not only out of affection to her memory, but because I wished to understand something of the country where *ma petite sœur* resided. I know as much, though I blush to say that much is but little, of the literature of England as of that of France, and all I have learned has taught me to love my mother's land. Judge, then, how frequently the prejudices *de notre pauvre père* must have annoyed me; but knowing that it would be useless to combat them, I have listened in silence. I tell you all this, dear Cecile, that you may understand how well I can sympathise in your *feelings;* and if your future husband resembles the notion I have formed of Englishmen, I shall love him as a brother. But why doubt it? *You* love him, and that, to me, is a proof of his excellence, for my Cecile would not lightly give away her heart."

Cecile described Desbrow in terms that she meant to be measured, but the animation of her manner, and the sparkling of her beautiful eyes, belied the coldness of her words; and Auguste, as he kissed her forehead, told her she need not blush, for that he would inform no one that his *petite sœur* was in love, or, at least, he would keep her secret until—she was married.

The last letter received from Desbrow announced that he would be at Paris on the 28th of July, and it now only wanted two days to that period. Cecile's heart beat with joy at the prospect of so soon meeting once more with her affianced husband; but her joy was damped by observing the dissatisfaction marked on the brow of her father, and his total avoidance of all recurrence to the subject of Desbrow's approaching arrival. She had never yet touched on her intention of relinquishing her fortune in favor of her father and brother, to any one save Desbrow. A feeling of delicacy made her shrink from the acknowledgements, or refusals, it might call forth; and she determined that the first announcement of it should be the deed of gift which Desbrow had undertaken to have drawn up for her, and which she wished him to present to her father. Cecile had marked with regret, that her father's dis-

like to Desbrow had rather increased than diminished, within the last few months, and she thought that such an act of generosity, as the relinquishment of her large fortune, might induce him to think more favorably of her future husband. She anticipated with delight her parent's surprise and satisfaction, and was indulging in bright day-dreams of the future, when, on the morning of the 28th of July, Auguste came to tell them that he must bid them adieu for a short time, as he had received orders not to leave his regiment, which was to be kept in readiness for being called out at a moment's notice.

A presentiment of evil, against which she tried in vain to struggle, oppressed the spirits of Cecile. Her brother attempted to laugh her out of her dejection, but it was evident that his gaiety was forced; and to the assertions of the Comte de Bethune, that the ordinances published the day before, would be the saving of the throne and the altar, he replied, that he only hoped they might not be made the excuse for subverting both.

"The people must be kept down," said the Comte, angrily, "and to achieve this imperative object, the press, their intellectual steam-engine, must be restrained in due bounds. The king has shown a proper firmness, and if his subjects know not how to bow to the chastisement which their licentiousness has brought upon them, they must be taught—that's *all*."

"I hope this effort will terminate well," said Auguste, thoughtfully.

"It must," replied his father; "the king has too long acted the indulgent father to his people, and he must now show them that he can assert his own dignity, when they forget it. France has always been endangered by the too great goodness, or as others call it, weakness, of her sovereigns, and it is reserved for Charles X. to make his subjects respect his firmness."

Auguste cast a glance at Cecile, which showed that he viewed not the present state of things with sentiments the same as those of his father; and then, embracing them both, left the hotel, to join his regiment in the Rue Vert. Cecile could not suppress the tears that rushed into her eyes when she saw her brother gallop from the door; she watched his receding figure, until it faded from her sight in the distance, and unable to control her emotion, was seeking her chamber, when she encountered her father.

"You weep," said he; "this is childish; the daughters of the house of Bethune were not wont to weep, when dangers menaced the sons; they would have girded on their swords, and urged them to oppose the enemies of their king, instead of giving way to tears. '*Les convenances*' must not be violated, my daughter, so no more tears."

While he strode on with an air of lofty grandeur, Cecile hurried from his presence, wounded by his remarks, and disgusted with the mock heroic dignity of his reproof at such a moment.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Qu'est ce qu'une révolution par le peuple? Les malheurs, du sang, de la honte. Qu'est-ce que la liberté par les révoltes? Un rêve, le desordre, des crimes."

Desbrow arrived at Paris, late on the evening of the 28th of July. He had intended to have taken up his abode in one of the hotels in the Rue de Rivoli, but found it impossible to reach it, from the tumult in the streets, and the vast populace which impeded his progress. He ordered his postillions to drive to the Rue de Richelieu, and it was not without considerable difficulty that he reached the Hotel du Nord in that street. All was confusion. Masses of the populace were continually forming, who resisted the endeavors of the gens-d'armes to disperse them. A charge of cavalry scattered them for some time, but they quickly formed again; and, soon after Desbrow had entered the hotel, regular charges took place, and the gens-d'armes commenced firing on the mob. The shop of Le Page, the armorer, was broken open, and all his arms seized. The cavalry charged again, and a portion of the populace, among whom were some women, rushed into the court of the hotel, to seek protection. They were pursued by the soldiers, who, infuriated at the massacre committed amongst them a few minutes before, in the Palais Royal, commenced reprisals, not observing, owing to the darkness, that they were attacking unarmed men and women who were mingled with the insurgents.

Desbrow's two servants were unpacking the carriage, and he was standing by it, waiting to receive a case of jewels intended as a bridal present for Cecile, when a party of soldiers rushed into the court, and commenced firing on the people. His servants presented him a pistol, which they had snatched from the pocket of the carriage; and, almost at the moment he

grasped it, a woman fell by his side, mortally wounded by a shot from one of the soldiers, who continued to advance towards the spot where Desbrow stood, brandishing his sword, and cutting right and left. Desbrow warned him not to approach, and raised the pistol to show him that he was armed, when a part of the people who had crowded behind him, with the intention of entering the hotel, having been repulsed by the owners, who had closed the door, were now driven forcibly against him. In the scuffle his pistol went off, and an officer, who had that moment entered the court to call off his men, received its contents, and fell from his horse.

Desbrow felt horror stricken, and the cheering of the mob around him, who cried out, "Vivent les Anglais, bravo, bravo!" almost maddened him. The proprietor of the hotel opened a small side door, and pulled Desbrow into the garden, and thence by a back passage into the house, dreading that the angry soldiers would cut him to pieces. His mind was in a state of the most violent agitation: he thought not of his own safety—he thought only that he had deprived another of life, and that other, evidently a person who came to restore order, and draw off his soldiers. He intreated the proprietor of the hotel to go, or send, to ascertain if there was any hope of saving the wounded officer, though his fears told him that the wound was mortal; and the man, seeing his perturbation and anxiety, despatched two of his waiters to make inquiries. They soon returned, stating that the officer had been taken into a private house on the Boulevards, where he had expired, and that this information they received from the servant who had assisted to convey him to it. Desbrow groaned aloud, and one of the waiters, with the intention of consoling him, remarked that he had done a good action, for he had killed the only son of one of the greatest enemies of the people, the proudest aristocrat in France, the Comte de Bethune.

All attempts to describe Desbrow's feelings at this intelligence, would be useless. His brain burned, his heart throbbed as if it would have burst its prison, and alternate cold and hot fits shook his frame.

His first impulse was to fly to Cecile—to protect—to console her, under this terrible affliction; but a moment's reflection told him that the murderer of the brother must never again approach the sister. O God! O God! thought Desbrow, was it reserved for my hand to destroy the happiness of her, I would sacrifice my life to preserve from a pang?—And now rushed to his memory all the fond things Cecile had filled her last two letters with, relative to this lately found, and dearly beloved brother. And *he*—*he*—had murdered him! There was agony, there was madness in the thought!

A violent brain fever seized Desbrow in the course of the night, and for ten days, his life was despaired of; his faithful servant never left his bed-side, during which period, the sick man raved incessantly of Cecile and her brother, and implored to be taken to them.

A naturally strong constitution enabled him to conquer this malady, though it left him reduced to almost infantine weakness; but with returning health came memory, which brought before him all the misery of his position. A letter was given to him, with a black edge and seal; and it almost fell from his trembling hand, when he saw the signature of the Comte de Bethune. Its contents were nearly as follows:

"Sir,

"After the dreadful calamity you have brought on my house, you cannot be surprised at my prohibiting you from ever again addressing my daughter. Your own feelings would, I trust, render this prohibition unnecessary, but I owe it to her peace of mind to make it. I will not reproach you; your own heart must avenge the wounds you have inflicted on ours.

"Gustave, Comte de Bethune."

"How strange," thought Desbrow, "that he should think it possible that I could again seek Cecile! He must believe me totally bereft of feeling, nay, of common delicacy. Strange, too, that he could write to me; but he is unlike other men."

To think of Cecile was torture, but not to think of her was impossible. Every recollection of her was fraught with wretchedness, because it was associated with her murdered brother, and the sorrow *he* had heaped on her head. He pictured her to himself, pale and worn with grief, the shadow of her former self, weeping with bitter burning tears the loss of a brother so beloved, and shrinking beneath the accumulated misery, that she owed that cruel blow to *him*, whom she had so loved and trusted. Sometimes he thought of writing to her, of telling her how deeply, how truly he sympathised in her grief;

but could she again look at the characters traced by a hand stained with the blood of her brother! No! he must not—dare not—intrude on the sacred privacy of her feelings! he never now could be aught to her, save a person whose name she must shudder at hearing; and the blissful dreams of happiness he had indulged for so many months—indulged until they had become a part of his existence, must now be abandoned for ever. Every hour that he remained in Paris seemed to increase, instead of diminishing, the chagrin that weighed on his spirits and preyed on his heart; and the medical men who attended him, observing the slow progress he made towards returning health, strenuously advised his going to Italy, as soon as he could bear the journey. To return to England, and face the friends he had prepared to welcome his bride, he had not nerves to support. How could he enter the home he had taken such pleasure to decorate for her, now that he must seek it *alone?*

Such reflections led him to adopt the advice of his physicians: it was better to go to Italy—any where, in short, where he was unknown—than to remain at Paris, or to return to England at present. Yet it was not without a bitter pang that he left Paris, for it contained Cecile; and all who have loved can enter into his feelings as it receded from his view. He would have given worlds to have ascertained the state of her health, and feelings, before he departed; but an invincible dread of discovering to his servants any thing more of the causes of his misery than they already knew, precluded him from sending to inquire at the Hotel de Bethune; and his debility permitted him not to move, except with the aid of his valet's arm, and then only for a few steps.

Three weeks before, Desbrow had entered Paris, high in hope and health;—he now left it, the first, crushed for ever, and the latter, broken down. His thoughts reverted to Heatherfield—*he* could feel for him—and for a moment he wished he was with him—But no! why should he draw on the sympathy of a friend, who could only share his sufferings, without the power of relieving them.

Such were the reflections of Desbrow, as he slowly journeyed towards Italy; and we shall leave him to pursue his melancholy route, while we return to her who occupied all his thoughts, and who was scarcely less unhappy than her lover.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

"Un pays en révolution souffre tout. Son lot est de boire à tous les calices d'humiliation. Rien ne corrompt et n'avilit le caractère moral d'un royaume comme une série des renversemens politiques. Le peuple, au milieu des tempêtes intestines, perd honneur, vertus, traditions, et piété: il croit à tous les monstres, et n'a plus foi en Dieu. Il adopte toutes les routes hors celle qui conduit au bien. Ayant un vaste ramas de lois, car chaque parti vainqueur a fait la sienne en passant, il ne distingue plus les vraies, des fausses; il se prosterne déchu, devant des millions de volontés et de maximes, sans distinguer quelles sont les bonnes, et sans savoir où il en est. Son plus grand fléau, c'est lui-meme. La fortune publique, en proie aux dilapidateurs, est en quelque facon, jouée aux des par les ministres de la majesté parvenue; et toute pliée sous les opprobres, la nation s'affaisse et périt."

Never had a day appeared so long to Cecile, as the 28th of July, that day so long looked forward to, as the one fixed for the arrival of Desbrow. At an early hour, the people assembled in masses in the street, and their tumultuous cries disturbed the monotonous tranquillity of the Faubourg St. Germain, and reached even the secluded Hotel de Bethune.

Cecile shuddered involuntarily as each fresh shout was borne on the wind, and re-echoed from the lofty apartments around her. Her father began to be less loud in his approval of the ordinances, now that they seemed to have excited the storm, which alarmed him; but he consoled himself with the idea, that the military force in Paris and its environs was amply sufficient to reduce the canaille to obedience; and he "muttered curses, not loud though deep," on their heads, wishing, like Nero, that they had but one neck, that with one blow he might extirpate them.

Notwithstanding the boasted march of intellect, nay, probably from that cause, an antipathy seems to exist between the upper and lower classes in France, which, though it may slumber in peaceful times, bursts forth with fury when any popular tumult awakens it into action. The feudal tyranny and heartless profligacy of the greater part of the noblesse of *l'ancien régime*, and the atrocious cruelty with which it was punished, have engendered a sense of mutual injury in the hearts of both parties, of which perhaps neither are sensible, until some occasion of contest calls it forth. The *parvenue noblesse*, created by Napoleon, are, strange to say, not more favorably viewed by the people, from whose ranks they were elevated, than are those of *l'ancien régime;* because they excite more jealousy, each member of their original class thinking himself as well worthy the

distinction bestowed on his more fortunate equal. Hence, dislike is added to a want of that respect which nobility of ancient birth involuntarily excites in their minds, and which the associations connected with certain names keep alive in their hearts. The three glorious, or inglorious, days of the revolution of 1830, (as many people are divided as to which term they are best entitled,) fully proved the truth of this antipathy between the upper and lower classes. The first groaned in bitterness at being humbled by the power of those they considered born but to obey them; and the second evinced all the insulting joy, natural to ignoble minds, at hurling grandeur and dignity from the lofty places they had occupied. They paused not to inquire whether they had worthily or unworthily filled these high stations; they only hated them for having been elevated, and gloried in crushing them. This feeling was strikingly manifested in the trades-people and servants—two classes owing their welfare, if not existence, to the noblesse they were so anxious to humiliate, if not to destroy. The march of civilisation, which precluded the atrocities practised in the former revolution, prevented not, however, the insulting display of triumph with which the engines of the latter proclaimed their victory over fallen power. The trades-people, who had fattened on the extortions practised on the noblesse, and the domestics, who had eaten of their bread, and worn the badges of their service, could not conceal their joy at their overthrow. Those who witnessed the conduct of these classes at Paris, during the three days of the revolution in 1830, must involuntarily have been reminded of the Saturnalia of ancient Rome, when the slaves were allowed not only liberty, but license. One difference, however existed—the Roman bondmen only doffed their chains for a given period, and then resumed them; but the French domestics believed—for what will not ignorance and credulity believe?—that they had permanently changed places with their masters, and, glorying in their victory, manifested their sense of it with all the licentiousness of uncultivated, unbridled, and truculent minds.

The Comte de Bethune was suffered to ring half-a-dozen times for his valet-de-chambre, who afterwards listened with an air of nonchalance, if not of insolence, to his remonstrance on the subject. The two *valets-de-pied* had disappeared without leave; the *aid de cuisine* had followed their example, and the coachman had volunteered his services to go in search of them, a search apparently fruitless, as he himself returned no more to the hotel during that day. The cook declared himself *au désespoir;* it was impossible for him to serve a dinner pour Monsieur le Comte, without the assistance of his *aide de cuisine*—he had never in his life attempted such a feat; so he consoled himself with taking a double supply of snuff, and loudly lamenting the *bêtise*, the *sottise*, and the impertinence, of Jules, (his assistant,) for leaving the *cuisine* without his permission.

The Comte found his appetite rather increased than diminished by the agitation and vexation of the day; and the prospect of having no dinner seemed to awaken him to a full sense of the events passing around him. He entered the *salon* of Cecile with a more troubled aspect than she had ever seen him wear, which increased the fear of the already alarmed girl to such a degree, that she turned deadly pale, and could hardly articulate the demand, if any thing had happened to her brother.

"No, nothing has happened—nothing can happen to him," said the Comte, "for our brave troops will soon have taught obedience to the disaffected wretches that have caused this confusion."

"Oh, God be praised that my dear brother is safe!" said Cecile, sinking into the chair from which she had risen in such alarm on her father's entrance; when, a yell from the infuriated multitude, passing the hotel, renewed her fears. The Comte's countenance wore a more yellow hue, and neither spoke until the shouts died in the distance; then Cecile, whose thoughts dwelt with her brother, again ejaculated his name.

"It is dreadful! shocking!" said the Comte, "to think that we shall have no —" (tidings of him, Cecile thought he was going to add,) but the word "dinner" escaped his lips, and grated on her feelings most painfully. A sentiment of disgust made her turn involuntarily from him; but he persevered in his lamentations, and deducing causes from their effects, attributed the flight of the *aide de cuisine*, the shutting up of the shops, and his consequent likelihood of going without a dinner, to the revolutionary principles of the *canaille*. Nor did he forget to state his belief, that to England, France owed this misfortune.

The Comte was in the habit of tracing every thing which he fancied an evil, in the minor concerns of life, to the influence of English example; and all the serious calamities he attributed to the same cause.

He frequently expressed his conviction that the unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth would never have been beheaded, but for the precedent afforded by the English in the decapitation of Charles the First; and, though Cecile ventured to tell him that the atrocious cruelties practised during the French Revolution had no parallel in that of the English, he ceased not to mutter, "Yes, yes; we are too near England: in exchange for our *modes*, and cooks, they send us their newspapers; through which our populace imbibe such pernicious principles. They teach the vile doctrine that kings do not reign by a right divine, and that they depend on the people instead of the people depending on them. Yes, yes; Comines the historian was right, when he said that 'Dieu n'a créé aucune chose en ce monde, ni hommes ni bêtes, à qui il n'ait fait quelque chose, son contraire, pour la tenir en crainte et en humilité. C'est pourquoi il a fait France et Angleterre voisines.'"

The proverb says, "beware of him who has read but one book." If the Comte de Bethune's erudition was not confined to this limit, it was wholly directed to one focus. He read with avidity every French publication reflecting on England and the English, implicitly believing all that could be advanced derogatory to the nation *en masse*, or its inhabitants individually; and if, by any chance, he met with a doubtful passage in some unprejudiced author, he was sure to turn it to the disadvantage of England. And yet this man had married a most amiable English woman, and owed innumerable obligations to her relations, whose conduct towards him and his daughter ought to have conquered all his antipathies to their country.

The porter had secured the *porte cocher*, and opened not the wicket, without being previously assured that the person requiring admission belonged to the house. But though attached to the family, he could not resist sympathising with the cries of joy which burst from the crowds that rushed through the street; and even Madame le Moine, who had grown, and was now sinking in years, beneath the aristocratic roof which sheltered her, could not repress some symptoms of complacency, as she observed the rapid progress of the power of the people, though she took abundant care not to exhibit them in the presence of the Comte.

Poor Madame de la Rue, belonging neither to the aristocracy nor the people, was the only person in the hotel who truly sympathised in the feelings of the Comte; but having always depended on the first, she affected to consider herself as a link in their chain; an affectation which had drawn on her the dislike of the domestics in the establishment of the Duchesse de Montcalm, and excited similar feelings in those of the Hotel de Bethune.

The servants of the Comte, like those of the generality of the noblesse at Paris, would have used all possible means to save their masters from personal danger; but were not sorry the masters should see the power of the people, and be forced to admit that they owed their safety to them.

Cecile had sought the solitude of her chamber, and on her knees implored the protection of Heaven for her brother: of herself she thought not; every fear was for him, and a thousand presentiments of his danger suggested themselves to her terrified mind. Desbrow, too, often occupied her thoughts during this day of agitation, but for him she had less fear; he was an Englishman, and could not be brought into hostile contact with the people, while Auguste would be sent to act against them, and her heart sunk within her, as imagination pictured his danger. With her hands pressed to her side, as if to still the beating of her trembling heart, and a face pale as marble, Cecile was found by her father when he came to summon her to dinner.

"I have been forced to go into the *cuisine* myself," said he, "to see what could be done, for that imbecile Latour could do nothing without his *aide de cuisine;* and with the assistance of Madame la Moine, we have managed to get a tolerable *soupe*, an *eminence de veau*, cutlets *à la minute*, and an *omelette soufflé—c'est mieux que rien*, for the annoyance of this distressing business has quite deranged my stomach, and made me feel the necessity of eating."

Cecile accompanied him to the *salle à manger*, and saw him do ample justice to the repast, during which, he complimented his own sagacity that had led him to the *cuisine*, and to which he owed his dinner. She tried to swallow a few morsels, but could not; and, in answer to her father's angry remonstrances, urging that the more one had to bear, the more one ought to eat, in order to gain strength to support our misfortunes, she could only murmur the name of her brother, and repeat the impossibility of her possessing any appetite while he was exposed to danger.

"It is very inconsiderate, to use no harsher term, Mademoiselle de Bethune,

to mention his peril at such a moment. After the full repast, to which my mental agitation has forced me, you expose *me* to the certain danger of an indigestion, while *he* is only exposed to the uncertain risk of violence from the *canaille*, who will soon fly before the regular troops. You have awakened apprehensions which, though my reason tells me they are unfounded, cannot fail to interfere with the digestive organ, and I shall have an attack of bile to-morrow. Go," turning to the maître d'hôtel, "and get me a cup of strong *café*, and bring the *chasse café* immediately after. I hope I may escape, though I feel a very uncomfortable sensation here;" (laying his hand on the epigastric region;) "and another time, Mademoiselle de Bethune, I request you will be more cautious. You will do well to imitate my philosophy; you see it always leaves me master of myself in the most trying exigencies. What, but this, gave me sufficient presence of mind to go into the *cuisine* to-day, when that imbecile Latour had completely lost his reasoning powers, and you see the result has been a very tolerable dinner. Even at the moment I am speaking to you, my philosophy enables me calmly to point out to you the dangers to which your inconsiderateness had exposed me, that you may learn to control similar ebullitions of it in future."

The Comte having despatched his *café* and *liqueur*, replaced his coat by a *robe de chambre*, and seated himself in an easy chair, that by a siesta he might assist the process of digestion; and Cécile was left alone to her own reflections.

Madame le Moine, having discovered from the maître d'hôtel, that their young lady had not eaten anything at dinner, brought in a *lait de poule*, of which she so pressed her to partake, that Cecile yielded, and then declared her anxiety to obtain some intelligence of her brother.

Would it not be possible to send one of the servants to try to learn something of him?" asked she.

"There is only the porter, the maître d'hôtel, and the cook in the house, Mademoiselle," replied Madame le Moine; "the first cannot leave his post—the second would mortally offend Monsieur le Comte, if he were absent from the antichamber when Monsieur le Comte awakes from his siesta."

"But *le cuisinier*," interrupted Cecile, "he surely might go—he could not be missed by my father now that dinner is over."

"Ah! mademoiselle does not know Latour," said Madame le Moine; "he is the greatest poltroon in the world, and would not venture outside of the *porte cocher*, for all the gold in Paris."

"What is to be done? Oh! my brother my dear brother!" exclaimed Cecile; "how long must I remain in this terrible state of suspense about your safety?"

At this moment, a discharge of musketry from a distance, followed by shouts and yells, interrupted her words, and increased her terrors; and the barking of Madame de la Rue's dog, and loud imitation of it by her parrot, broke on the silence of the hotel. The ire of Madame le Moine became excited, and she ran to the chamber of the poor dame de compagnie, loudly expressing her surprise and indignation that the infernal dog, and accursed parrot, as she called them, should be allowed to torment her young lady, when her nerves were in such a state of excitement. The loud and angry tones of le Moine only served to increase afresh the barking of the dog, and the still more discordant cries of the parrot; and their discomfitted mistress, alarmed by the violence of the femme-de-chambre, which now that Paris was in a state of revolt, appeared more to be dreaded, tried in vain to silence them.

"You see," said she, almost meekly, to Madame le Moine, "it is not my fault; I cannot keep them quiet: it is the firing that excites them."

At this luckless moment the parrot uttered one of the offensive names it had been taught to address to Madame le Moine, who, losing all patience, pounced on poor Coco, and, ere its mistress could protect it from her fury, silenced it forever, by wringing its neck; during which operation, Bijou assailed the petticoats of le Moine with his teeth, as if to rescue his companion from her gripe.

"Barbarous woman, you have killed my poor bird!" cried the weeping Madame de la Rue, while torrents of tears streamed over her rouged cheeks, leaving deep furrows to mark their course. Madame le Moine, feeling she had gone too far, yet too proud to attempt any excuse, threw down the dead bird, which was hastily seized by its throbbing mistress, and kissed and bedewed with her tears, while the assassin returned to her young lady, ashamed of the excess into which her anger had hurried her.

"Well, mademoiselle," said she," trying to smooth her ruffled brow, "I see no mode of learning intelligence of Monsieur

Auguste, except by my going towards the Rue Verte, to the barracks in which his regiment is lodged."

"Oh, my good Madame le Moine, how shall I thank you?" replied Cecile; "yet ought I to expose you to such danger?"

"Think not of it, mademoiselle; no one will mind an old woman like me, and I shall be cheered by the hope of bringing you intelligence of the safety of Monsieur Auguste."

So saying, she left her young mistress, and hastened to attire herself for her hazardous expedition, not forgetting before she went, to arrange a mess for Bijou, and to send a *cafetière* of excellent *café au lait* to Madame de la Rue, as a peace-offering.

It was not without great difficulty and still greater danger that the intrepid old woman arrived at the Rue Verte. She had to climb over various barricades, to cling to the closed *portes cocher* of many hotels, in order to escape the rushing parties of the populace, charged by, and charging, in their turn, the military, who were trying to disperse them. But even her terror prevented her not from examining every party of soldiers she saw, in the hope of discovering Monsieur Auguste; no trace, however, of him could she find. At length, having reached the Rue Verte, she discovered that the people had attacked the barracks in that street, and even at that moment, an active fire against them was kept up by the assailants.

In trying to clamber over the barricades once more, the poor old woman sinking with heat and excessive fatigue, made a false step, and fell over the heterogeneous mass that composed the pile raised to arrest the progress of the cavalry; and her temples, coming in violent contact with a sharp-pointed stone, she became stunned by the fall. When she recovered her senses, she found herself in a wine shop, close to the barricade, into which the humanity of some of the people had induced them to place her, not without sundry curses on the folly that had induced her to venture out at such a time. The woman of the shop washed the blood from her face, applied a bandage to her wounded forehead, and, having insisted on her taking a glass of wine, advised her to remain where she was, for the present. But the pale face and trembling anxiety of her young lady rose up to the imagination of Madame le Moine; and, though weak and exhausted, she again pursued her way through the street, one moment silent and deserted, the very dogs seemed frightened from their usual haunts, and the next, filled by masses of the populace, who rushed past her, sweeping away all that obstructed their course. At the Rue Royale, she saw a party of dragoons, and recognised the uniform to be that of the regiment to which the young Comte de Bethune belonged. She advanced to them, fearless of the danger with which their horses' feet threatened her.

"Stop, stop, I pray you!" exclaimed she in almost breathless agitation; "tell me—where is Monsieur Auguste, your officer?"

The soldiers passed on, scarcely turning their heads to regard her, while a few straggling people around, passed some rude jokes on her bandaged forehead, through which the blood obtruded. At this moment, when her trembling limbs refused any longer to support her, and that she looked in vain for some shop, or *porte cocher*, where she might enter, a man seized her arm, and, inspecting closely her face, exclaimed, "It is—it must be my aunt! In God's name, what do you here at such a moment?—why have you come abroad? You must be mad to venture out, and you have paid dearly for it too; for I see you are wounded. Well, well, the women now-a-days are more venturous than the men;—but how were you wounded?"

The poor old woman recounted her adventures in much fewer words than she was wont to use, a circumstance which drew two reflections from her *brusque* nephew—the first was, that she was an old imbécile to have ventured on such an expedition, and the second, that the hurt must be a serious one, which could produce such a miraculous abridgement of her words.

"This is a droll world," continued Jacques; "here have you, my old aunt, been exposing your life for the aristocrats, and more fool you, while I have been exposing mine against them. But the victory will be on my side, and a few hours will now decide the question."

"And so I must return without any intelligence of my dear young master," exclaimed the weeping Madame le Moine.

"Master!" exclaimed the nephew, angrily; "you forgot that *we*, the people, of whom you are one, have no longer any masters; it is now our turn to rule, for we are the conquerors."

Jacques supported his nearly exhausted aunt to the Hotel de Bethune, meeting on their way several straggling parties of the people, shouting and singing parts of re-

volutionary songs, in which he joined; and having seen her within the *porte cocher*, he cautioned her not again to venture out until all was quietly settled, and promised to bring her intelligence of Monsieur Auguste the next day.

"As for your old aristocrat of a master, as you are pleased to call him," added Jacques, "Monsieur Toutfier, I advise him not to show himself amongst us, for we want to see all the old *émigrés* out of the country, and the sooner they are gone the better.

Having expressed this flattering opinion, he left his aunt to the care of the porter, who seated her in his lodge, that she might recover herself a little, before she presented herself to her young lady.

The Comte de Bethune was awakened from his siesta by the discharge of musketry, that seemed to approach closer to the quarter in which the hotel was situated, than any that he had hitherto heard. He rang for his valet-de-chambre, and inquired how the riot, as he affected to call it, was going on.

"*Ma foi*, Monsieur le Comte, the *riot* is turning out to be a *révolution*," said Le Tellier; "the people are carrying every thing before them, and it is all over with the present dynasty."

"I will not, I cannot believe it," said the Comte, angrily; "with thirty thousand soldiers in the environs, it is impossible that the canaille can have gained any serious advantage." Had the Comte examined the countenance of his valet, he would have seen the half suppressed smile, that played over it—a smile that at this moment betrayed how entirely his sympathies were with those whom the Comte designated by the term canaille, and of whose triumph, Le Tellier allowed himself not to doubt.

In the following instant, a cry in the court-yard attracted the attention of the Comte, and he hurried to the open window of the ante-room, whence he beheld the *aide de cuisine*, evidently intoxicated, advancing towards the house, and brandishing a sword, while he screamed out, "*La liberté! la liberté!*"

"Send that beast away instantly," said the Comte; an order more easily given than carried into effect; for Guillaume had become pot-valiant, and having never used a sword until that day, would neither consent to relinquish it, nor to leave the hotel, though assailed by the united intreaties of the porter, valet-de-chambre, and cuisinier. More than intreaties they dare not try, for he brandished the sword in a way to alarm the three pacifically disposed old men, and boasted that he was "*un enfant de la révolution*," "*un brave*," who had that day fought for *la liberté*—nay, he displayed some trophies, in the shape of a pistol and dagger, won in the battle, which rendered the old men fearful of offending him.

"As for you, old fool," said Guillaume, turning to the cuisinier, "you are no longer *mon chef*. No, no, we are now all equals—yet no, not even so, the strongest must be the masters, and, as I am stronger than you, I order you to prepare me a supper, *bien soigné;* mind you are not too long about it, or I shall quicken your movements with a touch of this," pointing the sword at the frightened cook, who disappeared, terrified at the threats of the swaggerer, who had hitherto been one of his most submissive drudges, and who now uttered cries of "Liberty, liberty," that echoed through the court-yard.

Few words have ever been so profaned as the word liberty—a word so often misunderstood, that those who most worship the pure sentiment, shrink with abhorrence from the grim and distorted representations of it that ignorance and prejudice love to give. The French invariably mistake license and equality for liberty; and the feeling of the bête Guillaume on the subject, may stand for a faithful type of that of the whole of the lower classes of his countrymen.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"On reconnait l'amour véritable aux changemens qu'il produit dans nôtre caractère, et aux sacrifices qu'il nous rend légers."

We left Lord Heatherfield journeying towards his home, but with what different feelings did he now enter his paternal mansion! He no longer shrank from the glances of the old and respectable domestics, who had been in his family since his birth; and they knowing where, and how, the last few months had been passed, received him with joyful demonstrations of welcome. He could now look on the portraits of his excellent father and mother without experiencing any of the pangs of self-reproach; and he fancied they regarded him with the benignant smiles of approval which the dear originals had been wont to accord him in past days. Cold must be the heart of the person who can look on the portraits of those he has loved

—of those who loved him, and who are in the grave—and not refer to what *they* would have thought of the line of conduct he is pursuing!—nay, who do not refer to the thought with more tenderness than when they were in life! The portraits are all that remain to us—"shadows of shades" that have vanished—but they possess a power to bring back the past, and to warn us of the future. In the rooms where they hang, we have heard the voices of the dear originals addressing us with words of love; we have seen their eyes sparkle at our approach, and their lips welcome us with smiles. They are not all gone, while their resemblances remain to conjure up dreams of past happiness, and to renew in our breasts the feelings which in life they were wont to excite in us. When I see a son, furnishing and decorating the mansion which he has newly inherited, and destroying every vestige of its late occupiers, I cannot give him credit for much affection towards those he has lost. I would fain have one room at least, preserved sacred, where their images might seem to look down on the furniture they had used, and the apartment retain the same appearance as when they had lived in it. What salutary reflections might it not awaken in the children, who are now filling their places, to pass away like them, and, like them, to be replaced! But the luxurious inheritors of the present day, and the fashionable decorators and upholsterers, or rather, devastators, who suggest to them the thousand improvements, of which the basis is destruction, will rarely admit of even one room being left sacred to the penates; and the household gods, together with the household goods and family portraits—unless the latter are saved by being the work of some artist of celebrity—are banished to the lumber, or the auction-room, to make way for modern adornments and modern disfigurements.

Lord Heatherfield arrived at Heatherfield Park on Saturday evening, and the next day, attended service in the parish church. The fame of his good deeds in Wales had arrived before him, and there was not a single individual among the whole congregation who felt not a pleasurable sensation on his entrance, and who was not disposed to disbelieve all that they had ever heard to his disadvantage. Never did he offer up his prayers with so much fervor as now, when once more in that church, where so often they had mingled with those of the beloved parents, who were sleeping the sleep of the just in the tomb on which his eye rested. Who can gaze on the grave that contains the mortal remains of all that was dear to him, without lifting up the soul to that heaven where he hopes one day to be united to them? Without this hope, who could contemplate the grave without terror? A few months ago, and Heatherfield looked forward to an eternal exile from the spot on which he now found himself—for never would he have brought a guilty mistress, or a dishonored wife, to his home, or the house of God, where his excellent parents had offered so pure an example. But now—and deeply, truly, did he thank the "Giver of all good"—he was saved from sin and exile, and could look in the faces of those who had loved and respected his parents without fearing to meet reproval in their glances.

The good Dean Vandeleur, and his worthy wife, were the first to welcome Lord Heatherfield to his home: they had been judicious dispensers of his bounty during his absence, and the poor had been taught by them to bless the liberality of their benefactor. The friends and neighbors, who had so long been attached to his father, now flocked to Heatherfield Castle; and its owner found himself treated with the consideration and cordiality he feared he had forfeited by his unhappy entanglement with Lady Walmer, and the evils it had entailed.

He applied himself to nearly the same routine of life that he had followed in Wales, interrupted only by the visit to, and from, his neighbors; many of whom, blessed with daughters, showed no want of encouragement towards him whom a few months before, they branded as an immoral libertine, unfit to be received in their families. They had sentenced him without proof of his guilt, and now, absolved him without proof of his innocence. But he was still unmarried, had a large fortune, and an ancient title; and the world in general, and the fathers and mothers of marriageable daughters in particular, are peculiarly charitable towards such sinners, reserving all their severity for the female partners of their real and imputed crimes. Many an amiable young lady undertook the task of dispelling the gravity, if not melancholy, that pervaded the manners of Lord Heatherfield: and many more betrayed a sentimental sympathy with his feelings, that would no doubt have been highly flattering to him, had he observed what was passing around him; but his

thoughts were so wholly occupied with the image of Lady Emily Vavasour, that he was unconscious of the condescending kindness of his fair neighbors, and pursued the even tenor of his way, undisturbed by their attractions and attentions.

The papers announced the departure of Lord Vavasour, and his family, for the Continent; and, though Heatherfield felt a pang of regret as he read it, at thinking that Emily was no longer in the same country with him, he found consolation—nay, more than consolation—hope, in the reflection that Cecile, when she should have become the wife of his friend, would not fail to impart to Lady Emily, all that Desbrow would wish her to know relative to him. He now became impatient to hear of the marriage, and anxiously expected the letter from his friend that was to announce it, when he was shocked and alarmed by the accounts that reached England of the revolution at Paris. What a scene for Emily, and in her state of delicate health! He determined to set off to Paris directly, for he could not support the anxiety he felt; and he was on the road to Dover in less than two hours, after he had heard the announcement that had so painfully agitated him.

He travelled day and night without stopping, except to change horses, until he arrived at Paris. He met crowds of his compatriots on the road, returning from it, all of whom looked at him with surprise for hurrying to a place, whence they felt so delighted to get away. He examined every carriage he saw, but that of Lord Vavasour no where met his view; and a thousand fears were in his mind relative to Emily. He expected to have some trouble in passing the barriers on his entrance to Paris, but he found none: nay, being recognised as an Englishman, he was hailed with acclamations, and "Vivent les braves Anglais" was shouted aloud by many of the intoxicated groups who were passing to and fro, in the streets.

He stopped at the Hotel de Londres, in the Place Vendôme; and immediately proceeded to the British embassy, where he learned that Lord Vavasour and his family were safe and well, at the Hotel de Breteuil, Rue de Rivoli, and had suffered no annoyance, save alarm, during the three days of the revolution. His next inquiries were for Desbrow; but of him, to his great surprise, he could learn nothing. He had not presented himself at the embassy, and they therefore concluded that he could not have arrived at Paris. He obtained the address of the Comte de Bethune, intending to call on him the next day to inquire for Desbrow; and then, sought his hotel to take that refreshment, and rest, of which he felt he stood so much in need. His spirits were elated at finding himself once more so near his dear Emily, and being assured of her safety; yet still a vague dread of some accident having occurred to Desbrow, interposed to throw a damp over his nearly recovered cheerfulness. It was strange, it was unaccountable. What could have prevented his arriving at Paris so long after the time fixed for his being there? for well knew Lord Heatherfield that the revolution, and the dangers attendant on it, would have rather hastened, than retarded, the coming of Desbrow, who would be doubly anxious to be near Cecile at such a crisis. Was it possible, that on the route to Paris, Desbrow could have fallen a victim to any of the numerous bands of infuriated revolutionists marching towards the capital? This idea more than once occurred to Lord Heatherfield, and filled him with alarm. But tomorrow, thought he, I shall certainly learn tidings of him at the Hotel de Bethune; and with this hope he sought his pillow to dream of his Emily, and days of happiness to come.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

"Le fleuve révolutionnaire, où l'on disait vouloir retremper la nation, est une mer sanglante que l'usurpation se flatte en vain de traverser à pied sec: tout s'y engloutira à la fois, gouvernement, lois, et royaume."

The breaking out of the revolution in 1830, was so sudden that the greater number of English families of distinction who found themselves there, at that eventful moment, had not time to quit Paris before things had arrived at such a state that any attempt to do so would, in all probability, have exposed them to more personal danger than remaining on the spot. Lord Vavasour, therefore, decided on staying where he was, and during the three alarming days of violencce, did not leave his wife and daughter for a moment. It was not until the fifth day that, having sent a servant to inquire after the health of Mademoiselle de Bethune, they learned that she was ill, and confined to her bed, and that her brother had been dangerously wounded on the night of the 28th. This was all they could learn, for "Mademoiselle was

too ill to write, or even read a billet," as the old femme de charge stated to Lord Vavasour's servant. Emily would have immediately flown to her friend, but the barricades prevented the possibility of a carriage of any kind being used, and to venture through the streets on foot, was more than she had courage to encounter, had the delicacy of her health even allowed of her walking so far. While they were expressing their regret and anxiety, Lord Scamper was announced; and, having heard the cause of their uneasiness, kindly volunteered to go in person to the Hotel de Bethune.

"Mr. Desbrow must be there, long before this," said Lady Vavasour, "for I know he was expected to arrive on the 28th, and it is a great source of consolation to me that he should be on the spot at such a moment. The marriage of Mademoiselle de Bethune was to have taken place almost immediately after his arrival, and my daughter has promised to attend her friend to the altar."

"Well, if Desbrow is there," said Lord Scamper, "I shall see him; he is a very good fellow, though somewhat too liberal in his politics for me—I am, as you all know, a staunch Tory; and, hang me, if I do not feel ten times a more ultra one, since I have seen, what your liberals have effected here in so short a time. I have been in the midst of all their fighting, as a cool spectator; they wanted me to take a part—nay, tried to force me into their ranks, but I declined, and saw no glory to be gained in joining a band of ragamuffins, set on to fight by a few interested political speculators, who keep back until they see which party is the stronger, and if their mob succeed in overturning law and order, they will come forward to take all the merit to themselves, and laugh in their sleeves at those who have been solely fighting to make great men of *them*. I must say these Frenchmen are as brave as lions; by Jove, I saw them do wonders; but what good will it do them?—in three years they will have much less liberty, under some liberal king, *imposed* on them, while they are taught to believe they have chosen him, than they had under their old legitimate sovereign, whose only fault was letting them go on too far, and then pulling them up too short without knowing whether the reins were strong enough to hold them in. Aye, aye, you may smile," seeing Lord Vavasour look less grave than usual, "but I've been amongst them, and seen what sort of a set they are: they no more understand the *real* meaning of the word liberty, than a Hottentot does Greek; for they mistake license and equality for it; and it is to obtain both these, that they are so ready to fight. I have been telling all this to my wife, who has got a pack of new-fangled notions in her head, and says it was a grand sight to see a nation rise *en masse*, to defend their liberties; just as if she could know any thing about the matter. But all this perversion and conceit comes from her having once met one of these Doctrinaire writers at the Princess Valskinca's, whose soirées are a sort of zoological garden, where all sorts of animals are to be found; and the Doctrinaire, intending to mount by the brute force of the populace, made fine speeches of the grandeur of a people fighting for liberty, while I was longing to tell him, if I could have made it out in French, that I saw no grandeur in a mob fighting to put aside legitimate authorities, and set up such as himself in their place. People may say what they will; but things that read very fine in print, when they are set off in well-chosen words, make but a poor figure when one is on the spot to see them—behind the curtain, as one may say; and how I shall laugh, when our English newspapers come over here, filled with sublime descriptions of scenes, which certainly presented nothing sublime to my simple eyes, though they offered a good deal of the ridiculous. Oh! à-propos to the ridiculous, I forgot to tell you that Lord and Lady Arden arrived at our hotel the night before the revolution broke out. *He* behaved like a philosopher all through; and what is more, like a Christian, for he has a kind heart and tender nature, and was grieved that a single life should be lost. But for her, it was better than a comedy to see her. She thought that every gun fired was aimed at her person, was angry with her husband because he was not more alarmed, and between the firing demanded of all around her, if they believed in the existence of a future state, and grew pale when they answered her in the affirmative. Luckily for her ladyship's peace, her Italian courier, who believes in nothing, except the gullibility and inexhaustible purses of the English, assured her that there was no hereafter; and this information infinitely soothed her feelings. So much for a lady who sets up for *un esprit-fort*—a philosopher in petticoats. Well, well, I must say, I never saw an *esprit-fort* who was not more superstitious and weak than other people. By the by,

she says, that she saw Lady Walmer at Milan, at the opera, and that her ladyship left it the next day, to be married at Florence."

Lord and Lady Vavasour cast glances of alarm at their daughter, whose pale cheeks became tinged with a deep rose, at the intelligence so incautiously repeated. Emily would have given worlds to have questioned Lord Scamper further on the subject, but she dared not trust herself; and her father and mother, though nearly equally anxious, would not, in her presence, prolong the conversation. Lord Scamper took his leave, promising to return in the evening, with intelligence of Mademoiselle de Bethune, and had only advanced a few yards from the hotel, when, to his great surprise, he encountered Lord Heatherfield.

"Why, bless my soul," exclaimed Lord Scamper, "you are the very last man in the world I expected to meet;—when did you come? where do you lodge? and is your wife with you?"

"In reply to your two first questions, I came last night, lodge at the hotel de Londres, Place Vendome; but as I have no wife, I came alone."

"What! no wife! this is strange; for Lady Arden told us that Lady Walmer had gone to Florence to be married; and, I naturally enough concluded it must have been to you. To be sure I left the room before her sententious ladyship had more than half finished her story; and *entre nous*, as they say here, a pretty deal of sly scandalous hits were mixed up in it. And so, after all, here you are, still free from the shackles of matrimony. Happy dog! if you but knew your happiness! Would that I was equally free! but, like a fool. I was flattered into putting on my chains, and they have galled me ever since; and not a word of flattery do I get to render them lighter. I can hardly believe that Lady Scamper and Lady Janet Urquhart were one and the same person. She who used to be all smiles, and assented to every opinion, right or wrong, that I expressed, has never once agreed with me since we married, except it be, as I shrewdly suspect, in wishing the chains snapt that unite us. But it is no use lamenting; so I'll say no more on the subject of my domestic grievances, only that I caution you to take example by me, and shun wedlock. I have just left your old flame, Lady Emily Vavasour. I wish you had seen how she blushed, when I mentioned to the old folks, that Lady Walmer was gone to Florence to be married. I dare be sworn, that, like me, she fancied that you were the happy bridegroom; but, à-propos of that, who can he be? I must go and ask Lady Arden to tell me all about it, after I return from the Faubourg St. Germain, where I am now going to inquire after the health of Mademoiselle de Bethune, who is ill, and about whom Lady Emily Vavasour is so alarmed, that I promised to bring her tidings."

"Then, we have met at a happy moment," replied Lord Heatherfield, "for I am going to the Hotel de Bethune, to learn intelligence of my friend Desbrow; so we will be companions."

During their promenade, Lord Scamper amused Lord Heatherfield with a description of the three eventful days of the revolution, and, robbing it of all the bright colors with which its partizans had decked it, his picture had much more of the ridiculous than of the sublime in it.

The porter at the Hotel de Bethune, in answer to the questions of Lord Heatherfield, replied that no Englishman, except Monsieur, pointing to Lord Scamper,—had been within the gate since Monsieur le Comte de Bethune had returned from England, and that Mademoiselle was too ill to see any one: and with this information, they were obliged to be satisfied. In retracing their steps, from the Faubourg St. Germain, Lord Heatherfield reverted to the marriage of Lady Walmer: he wished Lord Scamper to announce to Lord and Lady Vavasour that *he* was *not* the husband; but he did not wish to ask him to do this, knowing how brusque and indiscreet he was. Lord Scamper, however, satisfied him on the point, by saying that he would certainly tell them that Heatherfield was not the happy man, "Though," added he archly, "I do not think you look unhappy, or disappointed either; and you are right, for you are a lucky dog, to escape being tied up—chained I ought to say—for life."

## CHAPTER XL.

"It is when we most suffer, that we least doubt the existence of that power which can afflict or heal."

Cecile de Bethune had waited in trembling anxiety for the return of Madame le Moine. At one moment, she would throw herself on her couch, close her eyes, press

her burning temples with her hands, and endeavor to remain quiet, till a fresh discharge of musquetry startled her anew, and sent her to the window, to strain her eyes in vain to discover what was passing, and to find nought but rushing multitudes, seen through the vapory mist of smoke, moving in confusion, and to hear the discordant yells of the mob, borne on the wind. She would sink on her knees, and offer up her prayers to that almighty Providence, in which was alone her trust, for the protection of her brother, who never seemed so dear to her as now that she trembled for his safety. How often did her thoughts revert to happy England, where the steadiness and good sense of the people offer a guarantee for the peace and prosperity of its favored inhabitants; where the laws are respected, and the individuals of each class feel an equal advantage in supporting them; where men *reflect* before they *act*, and where good sense, the basis of all happiness, takes the place of that intoxicating enthusiasm, which in France subverts order to establish anarchy, and, in fighting for an imaginary good, loses sight of that of which it is in possession, and, after each new effort, retrogrades still farther from the point which it seeks to obtain.

Cecile had to bear all the painful suspense and alarm that preyed upon her sinking spirits alone; her selfish father was reposing in his chamber, and the tearful Madame de la Rue was bewailing the untimeld death of her "pauvre cher Cocco," and endeavoring to sooth the angry Bijou. Hour after hour rolled heavily away, until the exhausted Madame le Moine made her appearance, and the despair of Cecile became fixed, when she discovered that no tidings could be learnt of her brother. The agitation of so many hours, produced a violent fever, and, in the morning, she was found by the faithful le Moine, with throbbing temples, burning hands, and almost incapable of replying to her anxious inquiries. When her father was informed of her illness, he declared himself the most unfortunate of men.

"No one," he said, "thought of him, or attended to his comfort. His son left him a whole day, in the most painful state of suspense, which had interfered dreadfully with his digestion, and given him the most disagreeable dreams, and now his daughter chose to make herself ill, at the moment he most required her aid to administer to his comfort; it was too bad, and enough," as he declared, "to vanquish even his philosophy."

A physician was sent for, who ordered Cecile to be kept perfectly quiet, and administered all the palliatives, with which French doctors tamper with the maladies which English practitioners attack vigorously, sometimes destroying the patient as well as the disease, while the French physician stands by to see fair play between them, only assisting his *malade*, by a certain quantity of innocent *tisanes*, which, according to him, *may* do good, and cannot do harm.

Another day of alarm passed over Paris, and its excited inhabitants, and still brought no tidings of the Comte Auguste de Bethune; but Cecile was now unconscious of all that was passing around her, for a delirium rendered her insensible of aught, save the confused images that presented themselves to her troubled imagination. She raved continually of Auguste and Desbrow, who were mingled together in all her dreams, and her father, who more than once, on entering her darkened chamber, had heard her repeat their names, and address them in terms of the tenderest affection, muttered to himself, that "it was strange, very strange that she did not talk of *him*, and that Monsieur Desbrow occupied so much of her thoughts."

The third day, a man brought a few pencilled lines from Auguste, almost illegible, from the weakness of the hand that traced them, stating that he "had been wounded, but was now doing well, and carefully attended to by the good people who had received him into their house, and nursed him as if he had been their son."

Tranquillity being now, in some degree, restored, at least so far, that the Comte might venture abroad in safety—a circumstance which that prudent personage took care to ascertain before he ventured his precious person without the gate of his hotel—he proceeded to the house on the Boulevards, indicated by his son, whom he found weak and languid from loss of blood, but now out of all danger, his surgeon having pronounced that he might be moved with perfect safety."

The first inquiries of Auguste were for his sister, of whose illness his father informed him—not without comments on her want of philosophy, and several complacent remarks on the extent of that, which he himself had displayed on the late occasion:—"I was as cool and collected as at this moment," said the egotis-

tical Comte, "notwithstanding that I admit there was sufficient annoyance to shake a less firm mind than mine; for, independent of the alarm naturally excited by the dangers to which you, my only son, the last scion of my ancient house, and supporter of my noble name, were exposed, I felt aware that the canaille would probably turn their eyes on my hotel and person; on the first, as one of the most distinguished residences of that aristocracy which they detest; and on the second, as one of that class who they know despises their power. Though I did not belong to the ministry, which, without vanity I may say, was an unfortunate thing for the monarchy, yet I thought they would probably have attributed much of the ordinances to my counsel: and *entre nous*, I always have advocated, and always will advocate, vigorous measures against the encroachments of the people. Had the king listened to my advice, things might be different; *mais hélas!* I fear it is *now* too late. But to resume—all this rendered my position peculiarly dangerous; yet I bore it with that equanimity that has always distinguished me: and, while others were either overwhelmed by fear, or wholly engrossed, by the events passing around them, I had presence of mind sufficient to occupy myself in superintending—nay, I may say in assisting to prepare—a repast, which, without my efforts, never could have been accomplished. This, my son, is true philosophy, and, exercised at such a moment of danger, emulates that displayed by Archimedes; for if the geometrician of Syracuse was so occupied in solving a problem, as to be ignorant that the besieging enemy had taken possession of the town, and lost his life in consequence of his abstraction, surely *I*, who was aware of all the danger that threatened me, displayed more *sang froid* in thus preparing the means of sustaining existence, while others trembled at the risk of losing it."

Auguste could hardly repress the smile at the comparison made by his father between a philosopher who thought *not* of self, and him who thought of nothing else; the old Comte, mistaking his own obtuseness and selfishness for philosophy—than which nothing can be more opposite—a mistake that he was not the first to have made. He inquired minutely into all the particulars of the time and place where his son had received his wound; but Auguste could only tell him, that it occurred almost at the moment he had entered the court of the Hotel des Princes, in the Rue de Richelieu, to call off his soldiers, who had pursued thither some persons who had pelted them with stones.

The Comte immediately determined to go to the Hotel des Princes, and make all the necessary inquiries, with the intention, if the truth must be owned, of having an exact statement drawn up, as a future and incontestable claim on the Bourbons, whenever they might be restored to the throne.

From the proprietor of the hotel, he learned that, to an English gentleman, only a few moments arrived, his son owed his wound; and that the gentleman aimed not at him, but directed the pistol in self defence towards the soldiers, who were pressing on him, when, owing to his being pushed by the persons behind him, it went off, and killed the young officer. "No sooner," continued the loquacious host, "had Monsieur Desbrow heard the name of the officer he had inadvertently killed, than he was seized with such agitation, that a violent fever was the consequence, and he now lies dangerously ill in my hotel."

"Oh! oh!" thought the Comte to himself; "so, then, it is to the lover of my daughter that I owe the danger from which my son has so narrowly escaped; and he and those around him, believe that Auguste is dead. Much may be made of this: Desbrow cannot, dare not think of again seeking the sister of him whom he believes he has killed; but, lest he should I will write him a letter to forbid his ever addressing her again, and so dictate it, that, without entering into any particulars, or making any false statement, it shall serve to him as a confirmation of what he already believes. Thus, shall I get rid of a marriage that I never could contemplate without displeasure, and either reserve my daughter's hand for one of my own countrymen, or, what would be still better, reserve her and her fortune for my own advantage. This is, indeed, a lucky discovery; but I must carefully conceal it from Cecile and Auguste, or otherwise they would soon inform Desbrow of his error; and the shot inadvertently fired, and the chagrin and consequent illness of Desbrow, would perhaps, with their romantic feelings, only increase the attachment between all three. No, no; I must keep all this confined to my own breast, and leave Cecile to imagine that her lover has deserted her; which, if she possesses any pride, (and when was a De Bethune known to be without it?) must soon destroy her attachment to him."

It was in consequence of these reflections, that the letter, already noticed, was despatched from the Comte de Bethune to Desbrow, and that the latter left Paris nearly overwhelmed with despair from believing himself the murderer of the brother of her he loved.

Youth and a strong constitution enabled Cecile to conquer the fever that attacked her: but it left her so weak, that for several days she was unable to leave her chamber. Her brother returned to the Hotel de Bethune, his wound nearly healed, and all danger past, no vestige of it remaining but the paleness and languor consequent on such an accident. All this time was given to his sister; he would sit whole hours with her, reading aloud, or sketching and conversing on the topics that he thought most likely to interest her. He perceived that her spirits continued to be deeply depressed, though it was evident she took pains to conceal it; and when he rallied her *tristesse*, she would faintly deny the truth of the charge, or else attribute it to the languor left by her recent malady. But when Auguste one day asked her when Desbrow was to arrive, to deprive him of his *petite sœur*, the deep blush that mounted even to her temples, and the embarrassment of her air and manner, convinced him that he had now discovered the cause of her melancholy, which it was clear was connected with the non-arrival of Desbrow. She tried to utter some words, but they were rendered unintelligible, by her agitation.

Auguste took her hand affectionately, and said, "I hope, my dear sister, you will not think me unkind for pressing a subject on you, that evidently inflicts pain. When did you last hear from Mr. Desbrow?"

"Not since ten days before the fatal revolution broke out," replied Cecile; and her cheek became as pale as marble.

"Did he not, in that letter, name the day he would arrive at Paris?" asked Auguste.

"Yes," answered his sister, "he stated he would certainly be here on the night of the 28th, and that early next day, he should present himself at the Hotel de Bethune. Since then, I have never heard from him," continued the gentle girl, trying to recover some degree of composure.

And now, Auguste no longer wondered at her melancholy.

"This is strange, very strange," said her brother, after musing for a few minutes. From all you have told me of Monsieur Desbrow, he is not a man to trifle with the feelings of a woman whose hand he has demanded. Nor is my Cecile a woman likely to be forgotten by one who has once loved her. That man exists not, who dares with impunity trifle with the peace of my sister."

And the blood came to the cheeks of the high-spirited Auguste, as he uttered the words.

"Oh! no, my brother," said Cecile, "Desbrow is incapable of aught approaching to dishonor, or fickleness; he is all goodness; and illness, or some other fatal cause, can alone have retarded his arrival, or prevented his writing to explain why he has not come. A doubt of his affection has never crossed my mind; but, even such a doubt, were I capable of harboring it, would be less insupportable, than the agonising fears I feel for his safety."

Auguste drew her to his breast, and kissed her forehead; for there was something so touching in the confidence which the pure-minded girl reposed in the affection of her lover, that it endeared her still more to the heart of her noble-minded and generous brother.

"Has my father never touched on the subject?" asked Auguste.

"No," replied Cecile; "he knew that Mr. Desbrow was to arrive on the 28th, and as my health has suffered so much since that period, his delicacy has probably prevented his reverting to his non-arrival."

Auguste was less induced to give their father much credit for delicacy, because he had known him longer, and better than had Cecile; but still he did not suspect him to be in any degree connected with the extraordinary silence of Desbrow; and, like his sister, he feared that illness, or some fatal accident, had befallen her lover, though from her, he carefully concealed this impression.

## CHAPTER XLI.

"Misfortunes which have not been caused by our own misconduct, and which we may lay open to sympathy, are but as skin wounds, which are easily healed; but those which guilt has produced, and shame conceals, like the stolen prey of the Spartan boy, prey on the vitals, and the pangs must be concealed, while pressing their inflictor to the breast he feeds on."

When Lords Scamper and Heatherfield parted, it was the intention of the former, to call on Lord and Lady Vavasour, to state the result of his visit to the Hotel de

Bethune; and he also intended to communicate Lord Heatherfield's arrival, as well as to state that he was not the husband of the *ci-devant* Lady Walmer; but just as he reached the Rue de Rivoli, he met his servant, who had been sent in search of him by Lady Scamper, to announce that a courier had arrived from England, with letters, demanding his immediate presence.

He and Lady Scamper were on their route to England in two hours after; the letters he had received, having informed him of the dangerous illness of an uncle, whose heir he expected to be, and who required his immediate return. The consequence was, that poor Lady Emily remained undeceived, in her belief that Lord Heatherfield was now the husband of Lady Walmer, as Lord Scamper had only time to write a few hasty lines to inform Lord Vavasour of his sudden departure for London, and omitted to name Heatherfield.

In a few days from this period, Lady Emily became so much worse in health, that the medical men whom her father consulted, advised her being taken to Italy, by slow journeys; an advice which the anxious parents were most desirous to adopt, but which she intreated them to postpone, until her dear friend Cecile was quite recovered.

At length, obtaining the welcome intelligence that the physicians of Mademoiselle de Bethune having pronounced her to be convalescent, no longer objected to her receiving her friends, she hastened to the Faubourg St. Germain; where the two amiable girls wept tears of pleasure, at once more meeting and pouring their griefs into each other's breasts. How much had they to communicate, and with what a true sympathy did either listen to the chagrin of her friend! Their sorrows seemed to be a new bond of attachment between them; and they reflected with deep regret on their approaching separation.

Lady Emily was soon made acquainted with Auguste, and learned to appreciate his many estimable qualities, while he was so charmed with her gentleness and good sense, that he was never more happy than when forming a trio in the boudoir of his sister, during the long visits of Lady Emily.

The Comte de Bethune beheld unmoved the ravages which anxiety and suspense were producing on the health and spirits of his amiable daughter. His obtuseness prevented him from being able to judge of the intensity of her feelings; and he allowed her to pine away from day to day in a state of mind, which, had he been aware of it, even he, cold-hearted as he was, might have pitied, enough to have induced him to utter the few words which would have explained all the secret of her lover's absence, and silence. But in his stolid blindness, and all engrossing egotism, he even congratulated himself on the success of his plan for separating the lovers, and scarcely regretted the wound which had given his son so much suffering, since its result had been to break off the proposed union, that was so hateful to him. There were moments, when, as Auguste de Bethune marked the pale cheek and clouded brow of his sister, his indignation became excited against Desbrow, and his proud heart panted to avenge the slight which he imagined had been offered to her; but she so continually assured him of the impossibility of her affianced husband's acting ill, that he suffered his anger to be subdued by her reasoning, and awaited with outward calm, but internal impatience, the developement of Desbrow's mysterious absence and silence.

The Comte de Bethune still continued to give way to his gourmand propensities, and after dinners, more suited to his epicurean palate than to a stomach weakened by intemperate indulgence, he would retire to his chamber, and, in a luxurious siesta, pass an hour previous to commencing his evening visit of condolence to his friend, the Duchesse de Montcalm, who, by the recent revolution, found her salons deprived of most of her accustomed visitors. It was after a more than usually *recherché* repast, to which he had done ample justice, that having been somewhat more than an hour asleep, his valet de chambre entered to announce that his carriage was at the door; and on approaching his master, discovered that his slumber was that of death. Medical advice was called in, but the vital spark was extinct; and the remains of him, who had never felt but for self, were bedewed with the tears of two affectionate children, who, in spite of his errors, mourned him as if he had constituted their happiness, instead of having never considered that of any human being, save his own.

A will was found in the deceased Comte's écritoire, in which the most minute directions for his interment were detailed, and strict injunctions given that it should be graced with all the pomp and ceremony befitting his rank. Yet, at the period when this will was made, some four or five years prior to his death, his fortune was so limited as barely to allow him to

leave a scanty pittance to his children; for he had, with that engrossing selfishness which characterised him, sunk the greater part of the sum, he had received as an indemnity, in an annuity for his life; his funeral expenses, therefore, were to have been deducted from the miserable portions allotted to his children. Thus did the egotist exhibit even to the last, his two ruling passions—selfishness and vanity.

It was now, that Cecile felt the inestimable value of her brother; he soothed and comforted her, attended to all her wishes, as if his sole object in life was to fulfil them, and watch over her happiness.

When the funeral had taken place, and all the necessary changes been made in the domestic establishment, it occurred to Auguste, that nothing could be so conducive to the recovery of his sister's health, and peace of mind, as to accompany Lady Emily Vavasour to Italy.

The proposal was readily agreed to by Cecile, who, independent of the desire of enjoying the society of her friend, was anxious to remove her brother, whose impetuosity she dreaded, from the possibility of meeting Desbrow, until his unaccountable absence and silence should have been satisfactorily explained. That it would be, she never allowed herself to doubt, for the purity and sincerity of her own attachment permitted her not to suspect his, though, to all others, his apparent forgetfulness of her might warrant suspicion.

Lord and Lady Vavasour were scarcely less gratified than their daughter, by the prospect of Cecile and her brother accompanying them to Italy; and it was consequently settled that they should depart the same day, and make their tour together. To the repeated hints of Madame de la Rue, of the desire she had felt for years to see Italy, Cecile turned a deaf ear, but consoled her by a liberal present, and a new collar for Bijou, which last delicate mark of attention was received with nearly as much gratitude as the more solid proof of Cecile's generosity. The Duchess de Montcalm highly disapproved of the intended departure for Italy, and appeared no less surprised than mortified that her disapprobation seemed to make no change in their plans. She even observed, in pointed terms, on the want of respect it evinced towards the memory of her dear departed friend, their father; and commented on the *manque de convenances* of Mademoiselle de Bethune's travelling with her brother, without the protection of a *dame de compagnie* to *chaperone* her. To Auguste's observation, that Lady Vavasour's presence obviated the necessity of any other *chaperon*, she replied, "*Pas du tout*, Lady Vavasour being English could not discharge the various duties of a *chaperon* to a young French lady, the usages of the two countries being wholly different. She, therefore, advised that they should take with them Madame de la Rue, who she was sure would not object to go."

This counsel was not without a motive, for the Duchess very much dreaded Madame de la Rue's coming back as a fixture to her old apartment in the Hotel de Montcalm. But her advice had no longer any weight in the family de Bethune, and she never was so sincere in her regret for the death of its head, as when she discovered that it deprived her of the power of governing Cecile, and of interfering in her movements. She was scarcely civil when the sister and brother bade her farewell, and they were most philosophically indifferent to her feelings on the subject.

Cecile consulted Lord Vavasour as to the mode of having a deed of settlement drawn to insure her brother the half of her fortune during her life, and the reversion of the whole at her decease. Nor would she leave Paris until this deed was executed, though she took care to conceal her intention from Auguste until it was regularly carried into effect. She had much difficulty in persuading this generous and high-spirited young man to accept her gift; and it was not until she had appeared deeply wounded by his reluctance, and affected to view it as a proof of his want of affection for her, that he consented. This removed a load of anxiety from her mind, and she now entered into the preparations for her departure from Paris, with a lighter heart, though still oppressed with grief for her recent loss, and anxiety about Desbrow.

The grief which the sensitive Cecile experienced for the death of her father, was mingled with, or perhaps wholly composed of, remorse for not having sufficiently loved or valued him during life. Now that he was no longer before her, to disgust by his selfishness, or to *ennuyer* her by his absurd national prejudices, she forgot that either had been his prevailing characteristic; and gave him credit for qualities, for his possession of which she drew more largely on her imagination than on her memory. She wept for the father she *could* have loved and respected, rather than for him, whose errors had embittered the brief period they had passed together; and her gentle nature lent to his memory a brighter hue, than her

experience had ever been able to give to his actual existence.

Auguste had sent in his resignation, being determined no longer to serve in an army, which, like the old Prætorian guard, was ready to assist the most powerful candidate for the crown; and to transfer its allegiance from one sovereign to another, with the same facility with which it could change its uniform. The imperial eagle, the snowy lily, or the tri-colored ensign, were all the same to them; but, as *he* could not acquire their Protean qualities, he left them for ever, having certain old fashioned notions, ycleped principles, which he could not desert, but which the boasted march of intellect had taught so many of his contemporaries to forget or disdain. An oath with him was a sacred thing, and the one of service he had made to Charles the Tenth, he could only transfer to his legitimate successor.

Much as he loved France, he was not sorry to leave it at the present moment, when the people, intoxicated with the triumph they had gained, thought more of displaying than of using it soberly, to secure to themselves those rights, in the hope of obtaining which they had upset one monarchy, and erected another. Young and inexperienced as was the Comte de Bethune, he saw enough to make him tremble for the happiness of his country, when that happiness depended on the will of the fickle multitude, who so easily can be made the engine of the ambitious and designing. And he prophesied that Louis Philippe would with impunity attack that liberty which Charles the Tenth lost his crown for merely attempting to infringe.

It was on a fine day, in the early part of August, that two travelling carriages, containing the family of Lord Vavasour, and the De Bethunes, (Auguste and Cecile,) left Paris for Switzerland on their route to Italy. Though the roses of health no longer bloomed on the cheeks of our heroines, they still offered two as exquisite specimens of beauty as could be seen; and left nought to the beholder to desire; except that a little more red, might mingle with the almost snowy paleness of their complexions, and that smiles would show more frequently the dimples that were wont in other days to play round their lips.

## CHAPTER XLII.

"Il n'y a que les montagnes qui ne se rencontrent jamais."

When Lord Heatherfield left Lord Scamper, he again betook him to a search after his friend Desbrow, and was returning to his hotel fatigued and disheartened, at not being able to hear any tidings of him, when his *voiture de remise* broke down, and he was precipitated with such force against the step, that he sprained his ankle. On arriving at his hotel it was found to be so swollen and inflamed, that the surgeon who had been summoned to examine it, ordered him not to leave his bed, except for a sofa, until the swelling and inflammation had subsided. Never could a sentence of confinement have been so irksome to him as at this moment! when within a short distance of her who occupied all his thoughts, and into whose presence he hoped soon to have been admitted. He tried to walk when the surgeon had left him, but found every attempt at motion brought on such acute pain, that nothing was left him but to submit to be a prisoner for some days.

He looked forward with anxious impatience to seeing Lord Scamper, and to hearing how Lord and Lady Vavasour and their charming daughter had received the intelligence that he was at Paris, and free, and that Lady Walmer was married to another. Every step that approached his door during the first two days must be, he thought, that of Lord Scamper; but when the third day passed by, without his making his appearance, Lord Heatherfield, unable any longer to support his anxiety, despatched a note to his hotel, to apprise him of his accident, and to request to see him as soon as possible. To his inexpressible disappointment, the note was brought back, with the intelligence that Lord Scamper had set off suddenly for England, three days before; and here ended all his hopes of receiving any intelligence through him.

Three tedious weeks had rolled away, ere Lord Heatherfield was able to walk, even with the assistance of a cane; but the moment he could move, his first visit was to the British embassy, where, to his unspeakable surprise, he learnt that Mr. Desbrow had obtained a passport for Italy two days before, and had left Paris. He ascertained the hotel where his friend had resided, and proceeded there immediately, to gain intelligence respecting him. The

master of the hotel was absent, and all he could learn was, that Mr. Desbrow had been there for some weeks, confined to his bed by severe indisposition, and had set out for Italy two days before, to travel by easy journeys, as he was still too weak to bear the fatigue of quick posting.

Lord Heatherfield determined immediately on pursuing him; and having procured his passport, was on the route early the next morning, resolved to travel with all speed until he could overtake his friend. The evening before his departure, he read in a French paper the account of the marriage of Lady Walmer at Florence, with Prince Romano. This confirmation of Lord Scamper's news was a balm to his heart, and cheered his spirits so much that he could not resist again forming anticipations of happiness. He sent to the hotel to inquire if Lord Vavasour and family were still there; not that he dared, uncalled, present himself before them, but that he wished to know something of their movements before he departed: but his messenger returned with the intelligence, that the family had left Paris that day, and as it was not stated where they had gone to, Lord Heatherfield concluded that they had returned to England, and so left Paris with less regret, now that it no longer contained his beloved Emily.

He travelled the whole of the day and night that followed his departure from Paris, and arrived the next morning at ——, where he ordered breakfast. While it was being prepared, he sat near a window looking into a garden belonging to the auberge, and his attention was drawn to a lady and gentleman who were walking there. The gentleman gave his arm to the lady, and seemed anxiously attending to what she was saying. The singular beauty of the man struck him, and something in the air of the lady, who, though wrapped in a pelisse, still showed a certain grace and elegance in her motions that seemed familiar to him, rivetted his attention; when, as they drew near to the open window, the well known tones of Lady Emily Vavasour's voice struck on his ear. At that moment, the waiter entered with his breakfast, and Lord Heatherfield, quickly and nervously pointing to the lady and gentleman in the garden, demanded who they were.

The waiter replied, that he had forgotten their names, but that they were English, had arrived the night before, and were going on in an hour; and added, with that archness peculiar to French waiters, "Monsieur le Mari," pointing to Auguste, "had not badly chosen, for madame was one of the handsomest ladies he had ever seen, though a little suffering;" the possible cause of which he playfully touched upon, and for which Lord Heatherfield felt at the moment as if he could have annihilated him, though he doubted not the truth of at least a part of his statement. That Emily could be there alone, with any man who was not her husband, he deemed impossible; and that she *was* there—alas! his eyes bore witness, for he had seen her face as well as heard her voice. In the agitation which this painful discovery occasioned, it never occurred to him to ask whether monsieur and madame had any companions on their journey—no, he had seen them alone, and therefore, if the disturbance of his mind enabled him to form any reflection whatever, he concluded they were travelling alone. His breakfast, consequently, was sent away untouched—post-horses were ordered out forthwith, and he threw himself into his carriage in a state of anguish that might have excited pity even in an enemy. Had he waited only five minutes longer, he would have seen Lord and Lady Vavasour, with Mademoiselle de Bethune, join Lady Emily and her companion, for they had seated themselves on a bench at the far end of the garden, while Auguste gave his arm to Lady Emily to continue her walk. Had Lord Heatherfield's ancient valet de chambre been with him, he would have probably been recognised by some of Lord Vavasour's servants, and so would have learned the movements of the family; but he had left his master in England, and the servants who now composed the suite of his lordship were all foreigners, who knew nothing of the Vavasour family, and nearly as little of that of their present lord, their knowledge being confined to the fact that he was *un Milord Anglais très riche*, and that he was called "Milord Hathenfeldt," which was the nearest assimilation to his title that their stubborn organs of speech could attain. But names have little weight with foreign servants, who seem to be of the gentle Juliet's opinion, when she asked, "What's in a name?"—It is the purse and not the cognomen of their employer, that interests them; and as long as they can draw on the one, they care little for the other.

Lord Heatherfield overtook his friend Desbrow the night of the third day of his journey, and was shocked to witness the ravages that illness had produced on his

frame. He was scarcely to be recognised, and was still so weak that Heatherfield felt seriously alarmed for his final recovery.

The meeting between the friends was most affectionate. Heatherfield reproached Desbrow for not having immediately informed him of his change of projects, and of his illness.

"Could you have doubted," said he, "of my coming to you immediately, and accompanying you, as I now intend to do, wherever you go, until your health is restored?"

"My illness," replied Desbrow, "attacked me the day after my luckless, fatal arrival at Paris;" and here he shuddered involuntarily. "The moment I could leave that wretched place I set out, and though I wished to have you with me, you can imagine why I also wished to keep you from Italy."

"Congratulate me, my friend," said Heatherfield, "for no longer does any reason exist why I should shun Italy. Lady Walmer is married to an Italian prince."

"I am, indeed, delighted to hear it," said Desbrow, and a faint smile flitted over his pale countenance, as he recollected his own prediction of that Lady's forming another attachment; "then, now, my dear friend, there can be no obstacle to your marriage with Lady Emily."

"Name it not," replied Heatherfield, changing countenance, "alas! that now can never be, for she is the wife of another. I saw them yesterday, she was leaning fondly on his arm, just as she used once to lean on mine, and pouring into his enraptured ears the delicious tones of that musical voice, which I have so often recalled to memory in the silence of night. I questioned a servant at the hotel where I beheld them, pointing to them as they walked in the garden, beautiful as our first parents ere they had known sin, while I felt almost as envious as the serpent that tempted Eve. The man remembered not their names; they had arrived only the night before, and were to pursue their journey immediately; but he jested on the good taste of Monsieur le Mari, and on the probable cause of the delicacy of health of madame; and *this*, to *me*, Desbrow—to me who would have given worlds to be in that husband's place!"

"But, surely, you would have heard something of their marriage at Paris," said Desbrow; "the position and rank of the parties *must* have led to its being a topic of discourse?"

"I was confined to my chamber by a sprained ankle during three weeks," replied Lord Heatherfield; "I saw no one, except a French surgeon, and heard nothing. The night before I left, I sent to the hotel, where they had been staying, and there, my servant learned that they had quitted Paris. It it now clear that Lord and Lady Vavasour returned to England, and that Lady Emily and her husband are on their route to Italy. Let us not recur to them again, my dear Desbrow, it unmans me; for *you* know not, *I* did not myself know, how I loved her, until I had lost her for ever, and at the period too, when I thought Lady Walmer's marriage had removed every obstacle to my again seeking her hand."

"All this appears so strange and unaccountable," said Desbrow, after a moment's pause, "that I cannot help thinking that some misconception exists. Lady Emily, from all that I have heard of her by one who knows her well, would not be likely to transfer her affections to another so soon after they had been placed on you; nor would she bestow her hand without them."

"Alas! my dear friend, I cannot, dare not, cheat myself into hope on this subject—let us drop it."

"But you—what has broken off your marriage with Mademoiselle de Bethune? She was very ill at Paris when I called at the hotel of her father to inquire after you."

"Ill did you say?" asked Desbrow. "This intelligence alone was wanted to complete my unhappiness. But, how could it be otherwise, after such a blow—such a blow that at once destroyed her happiness and mine? Do not question me further at present, my dear friend, one day, you shall know all; but now, I dare not enter on the subject. All I can tell you is, that Cecile is dearer to me than life, but that a dreadful circumstance has occurred by which we are separated for ever."

The friends pursued their route in the same carriage, and having remained a few days at Dijon, they did not again encounter the party of Lord Vavasour, who had taken another route.

The sympathy that existed between Lord Heatherfield and Desbrow rendered them still dearer, and more necessary than ever to each other. They mutually tried to turn their attention from the painful subjects which had lately so embittered their lives, and by the time they had reached the lake of Como, where they intended

sojourning for a few weeks, they had regained some portion of their former composure, though their secret griefs still rankled at their hearts. The health of Desbrow became better, and though Lord Heatherfield was still a little lame, he could walk without pain, and, supported by the arm of his friend, would ramble round the beautiful environs of Como.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

"Le monde méprise assez généralement ce qui rampe effrayé devant lui. Souvent ce qui le brave, il l'absout."

It is long since we have reverted to the ci-devant Lady Walmer, whom we left at Florence, where she stayed but a few days, as the quantity of English there, and their peculiar mode of staring at her and her party, led her to think that it would be wise to abridge the period of her sojourn in their vicinity. The Princess Barberini had remarked more than once, that it was strange her *cara amica* did not meet any friends among the crowds of her compatriots whom they encountered every day; and had several times commented on the rude habit of staring which the English had lately adopted. Every remark of this kind brought the color to the cheeks of the bride, and she endured pangs of humiliated pride, known only to the proud but guilty mind—which, conscious of meriting reprobation, shrinks from its infliction, and receives with anger, instead of penitence, the punishment induced by misconduct. There were many noble families at Florence with whom the Princess Romano had formerly been on habits of close intimacy; they now pointedly avoided her, or else stared at her, with glances in which curiosity or contempt were more evident than good-will. Not a single incident of this kind escaped the observation of this unfortunate woman; she seemed to be endued with an intuitive prescience on such occasions, and never saw a group of English without a heightened color, and increased pulsation of the heart. She grieved for the *consequences* of her misconduct, but not for the misconduct; hence she resented as injuries the sense manifested of it by her former acquaintances, and calling up pride to her aid, she returned their glances with haughty looks of contempt, which only served to render them still more ill-disposed towards her. The few days she had passed at Florence—the bridal days—which in general are considered among the brightest in woman's life, had been days of bitterness to the Princess Romano. And though she endeavored to conceal what was passing in her breast from those around her, and even to assume a cheerfulness she was far from feeling, the effects of the mortification hourly inflicted on her were but too visible in her manner. She became abstracted, impatient, and peevish by turns, and the Princess Barberini observed to her husband, that the poor Prince Romano had dearly earned the immense fortune of his wife, by being condemned to submit to her capricious temper.

The bridegroom was not slow at discovering that his bride was far from being the amiable person he had believed her to be. Still her personal beauty, which had the gloss of novelty to recommend it, excited his admiration, and her fortune, which was the principal point of attraction to him, consoled him for the defects in her temper, which were but too apparent. The want of solid mental acquirements in her companions, which had hitherto escaped her attention, now that she was thrown for some days wholly into their society, struck her with astonishment. They knew nothing of the history of their own country, and in accompanying her to view the many interesting objects that Florence contains, seemed more surprised than gratified at the extent of her knowledge of the different events, which gave additional interest to the spots where they occurred, and which she referred to on gazing on them. The frivolity of her ill-educated, but well-bred husband, disgusted her; and, when she was descanting on the munificence of the Medici, while admiring the treasures of art they had collected, or examining with the eye of a connoisseur some exquisite bijou from the hand of Benvenuto Cellini, he would refer with infinite *onction* to some modern trinket that he had seen at a jeweller's, or talk encomiastically of a picture so bad as scarcely even to be worthy of reprobation.

In a day or two after their return to Milan, ere yet the new-made wife had enjoyed the display of her bridal pomp, the Prince demanded her attention while he laid before her an *exposé* of the dilapidated state of his finances. He detailed the advantage to be acquired by liberating certain estates, whose revenues at present had passed into the greedy hands of usurers, or the scarcely less grasping ones of

nominal friends. "A hundred thousand pounds would," he coolly added, "free him from *some* of the most urgent and clamorous of his creditors, and give a considerable addition to his income, by redeeming a portion of his estates from the mortgages which at present were devouring them. As for the rest of his creditors, they would probably consent to wait, if his *cara amica* (kissing his wife's hand) would assign a part of her income for their liquidation."

The Princess heard him in silence; for surprise, in the first moment, and anger, in the second, deprived her of utterance. She saw that she had married a ruined man, and the conviction that he had wedded her for her fortune burst upon her with fearful force. Her anger got the mastery of her prudence, and she vented reproaches, "not loud but deep," which proved to her husband that to *his* reputed fortune, and *not* to *her* affection, as his vanity had led him to believe, did he owe the honor of her hand. She told him, with more of malicious triumph than feminine sympathy in her manner, that her whole fortune consisted of but four thousand a year, which would expire with her, and that this sum was barely sufficient to enable her to live in the style to which she had been accustomed.

"I admit this," said the Prince, "but am I to conclude that you will make no sacrifice whatever to redeem my honor? I have play debts to many of my friends—to the Prince Barberini, for instance, I owe a considerable sum, which he expects to receive immediately. The fame of your immense wealth, which was as little doubted by my friends as by myself, has led all my creditors to calculate on payment as soon as we were married. If they are disappointed, dishonor and a prison await me; from both, you may yet save me, by signing certain papers. Think of the triumph to our enemies—and your beauty has raised up a host—to see us, ere yet we have dazzled them by our nuptial splendor, disgraced and humiliated. You see the preparations I have made, that you might take that place at the head of the society at Milan, to which your charms, and my station entitle you; will you, can you, allow all these magnificent preparations to be useless? nay, to serve as marks of our disgrace, when, by merely signing some papers, all may be saved? I am heir to my uncle, the Prince Cesarini; he is old and infirm, and his fortune must soon be mine, so that I can then redeem your name, by paying the debts for which you will now sign it, and I shall owe my happiness to you."

The intreaties of her husband, and (but, alas! that we should be obliged to avow it,) the temptations of vanity, still more than his intreaties, induced the weak-minded Princess Romano to sign all the papers he presented to her. She looked around, and, in imagination, saw the splendid salons, newly and magnificently decorated to do honor to her, and in which she was to receive the homage of all the *élite* of the Milanese society. No, she could not resist the temptation of shining once more, though her reason whispered her, that her brilliancy must soon be eclipsed by poverty and ruin. In spite, however, of her conviction, this unprincipled woman for the gratification of her vanity, sacrificed not only her fortune, but ultimately her personal freedom—sacrifices, which affection would never have led her to make.

And now, all was gaiety and splendor in the Palazzo Romano. All the noble Milanese families, with the greater part of whom the Prince was nearly connected, flocked around his bride; costly wedding presents were showered on her with a profusion that indicated the donor's belief of her power of re-paying them by gifts of far higher price.

Balls, fêtes, and banquets, of almost regal splendor, were given in succession, by the new-married couple; and, in a few weeks, the Princess Romano found herself the acknowledged leader of fashionable society at Milan. She was consulted and appealed to by all, on matters of etiquette: her look was a fiat, and her word a law. Nor did she bear her honors meekly. No, she must remodel the society—she must establish the same exclusive system which has been so judiciously adopted in London, and whose effects on society have been to destroy that which it was meant to improve. Her zeal was as indefatigable as it was ill judged, and subjected so many persons to vexatious and petty humiliations, that it raised up a host of enemies, for her who had so much occasion to cultivate friends. She subverted the whole machine of society, which had hitherto moved so smoothly, because inequalities were unknown; and the unsophisticated Milanese could not understand, why lines of demarcation were now to be drawn, excluding many of those who had hitherto formed but one circle. In vain they referred to their ancient descent, mar-

riages, and intermarriages, through generations of noble blood; they were pronounced by the Princess to be bores, (or to have *mauvais ton*,) and consequently to be unfit for the exclusive circle she wished to form. Heart-burnings, jealousies, and quarrels, followed the innovations of the female dictator, each day rendering her more unpopular, and widening the breach between her and the persons she had excluded. Her husband, who was a good-natured, though unthinking man, endeavored to point out to her the evils of the course she was pursuing; but, like all weak people, she was pertinaciously attached to her own opinions, and refused to listen to his representations.

The friends and connections of many of those whom the Princess had made parihs in her circle, were amongst the creditors of her husband, and certain of the bills she had signed fell into the hands of those who had angry feelings towards her. For some time, they forbore, from a lingering sentiment of good will towards the Prince, to take advantage of the power of revenging the slights put upon them by his wife; while the vain and heartless woman unthinkingly pursued her reckless career of insolence and extravagance, their patience and intentions of forbearance daily diminished. So few English came to Milan, that having hitherto escaped any disagreeable contact with them, she had now ceased to think of her compatriots with dread, and imagined that her despotic empire at Milan was too firmly established to admit of their being able to shake it.

The husband, as thoughtless and unprincipled as his wife, had contracted fresh debts, and by misrepresentations relative to her fortune, had gained temporary credit, which only added to the difficulties with which he had been embarrassed previously to his marriage, and which now were overwhelming him by the accumulation of principal and interest. The tradespeople furnished his palazzo with all the necessaries and luxuries he required, taking care to charge in proportion to the risk of payment,—a system quite as well understood, by that class, at the other side of the Alps, as in more civilised London: and his numerous establishment, not being in the habit of receiving their wages, thought themselves entitled to commit as much waste as they could as a set-off against the sums due to them,—not that they were willing to forego even the least part of their claims: on the contrary, they loudly and frequently reiterated them to the secretary and major-domo of his excellency the Prince, which reiterations only drew forth sundry shrugs of the shoulders, turnings up of the eyes, and *che volete, non abiamo una denari*, from these respectable personages, who, having amassed a considerable sum by their rapacious extortions on the purse of their prodigal master, were careless of the fate of him they had plundered. Each domestic under the plea of not being paid, brought his wife and children to the palazzo, where they fared sumptuously, and thanklessly, at the expense of its improvident master, whose establishment was, by this means, increased threefold; so that his princely revenues, had they been still at his command free and unincumbered, would not have sufficed to defray the ruinous extravagance practised beneath his roof. Not only were the families of his menials maintained at his expense, but their friends and acquaintances, and the friends of their friends, were every day feasted in the Palazzo Romano; while these very plunderers who were thus ruinously expending thousands, severely commented on every new purchase made by the Prince and Princess, as unpardonable acts of extravagance. There was not a single domestic in their suite who felt either respect or gratitude towards them; yet both were kind and easy to their servants, who looked on their culpable indulgence without thanks, while they resented even the appearance of severity with murmur and reproaches. Such was the establishment of the Prince Romano, and the ill-ordered home of her, who a year before, was mistress of one of the best regulated houses in England.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

And is it thus we meet in a strange land?
We, who were once the world unto each other?
What, not a word of greeting?
Our hearts converse, although our lips are silent;
Or why this deep emotion that I feel,
Or that deep blush that dyes thy pallid cheek?

The friends highly enjoyed their *séjour* at Como, and passed many an hour on its beautiful lake, and in examining its romantic environs. Often did they pause to look on the ruins of the Castle Baradello, whence, in the year 1277, Sforza had the barbarity to suspend a cage, in which he imprisoned his conquered foe, the celebrated Torriani, who, exposed to

all the inclemency of such a stormy region, perished while gazing on those beautiful and vast domains, of which he had once been the proud master. Nor did they forget, that in this lovely spot, which seems as if only formed to soften the heart of man by displaying the works of his Creator in their most beautiful aspect, superstition and bigotry had marked their fearful reign; and their terrific engine, the inquisition, had here sacrificed hundreds of victims to its vengeance.

After Lord Heatherfield, and his friend Desbrow, had passed a month at Como, they decided on going to Milan; and the day previous to their departure, Heatherfield having letters to write, Desbrow strolled along by the borders of the beautiful lake, and, tempted by the fineness of the day, entered a boat, and was rowed by his barcaroli on its glassy bosom. The awning and curtains were drawn to exclude the sun; and he amused himself with a book, while he reclined on the cushions. The splashing of oars passing close to his boat attracted his attention—but how did it become rivetted when he heard a voice, whose tones thrilled to his very heart, uttering words of tenderness to some one! He partially drew aside the curtain and beheld Cecile—his Cecile—supported by the arm of another, and that other, one of the handsomest young men he had ever seen. He sank back on the seat, almost overcome by the intensity of his emotions. Rage, jealousy, and love strove for the mastery in his agitated breast. Had she then so soon, so very soon, forgotten him? —and could she wed another so shortly after the death of her brother? And yet, that she was married, admitted not of a doubt—how otherwise could she be alone with the handsome man he saw, or utter the words of tenderness he heard her address to him? It was all but too clear, she was the wife of another! and he was miserable. He ordered the boatman to return home, and entered the house a prey to the most violent emotions.

He sought Heatherfield, and related what he had seen, intreating him to fix their departure for an early hour of the morrow, as he dreaded the possibility of again meeting her who had never ceased to occupy all his thoughts. Lord Heatherfield could offer him no consolation, because, he believed that the presence of Cecile with a handsome stranger proved that she was married.

And now, for the first time, did Desbrow acquaint him with the dreadful catastrophe at Paris, and the letter from the father of Cecile. He was both shocked and grieved at the melancholy tale; and if he could not dispel the wretchedness of his friend, he at least soothed it by his sympathy.

They set off for Milan at an early hour the next morning, happy to escape the chance of another interview with her, to whom the thoughts of Desbrow reverted with a frequency and a bitterness known only to those, who, having tried to banish one prevalent idea from the mind, have found it recur still more pertinaciously, in spite of every effort. The similarity of the position of both friends, each supposing the object of his affection to have become the wife of a stranger, united them still more strongly. Sincere and mutual was the sympathy, abstraction, and melancholy then excited, and neither of them was *géné* by the presence of the other, from the consciousness of the congeniality of their feelings.

They had not been two days in Milan, when they met the English minister from Naples, who had only arrived the day before, on his route to England, and meant to stop a few days. He requested them to accompany him that evening to a *soirée* given by the Princess Boromeo; and pressed them so much, that though little inclined to gaiety, they at length consented. He called for them at the hour fixed; and having presented them in due form to the mistress of the Palazzo Boromeo, he led them through the superb suite of apartments, hung with some of the many chef-d'œuvres of art, which render Italy a land of attraction to all who know how to appreciate the pictures and statues with which it abounds.

Lord Heatherfield stopped in one of the rooms to admire an exquisite group by Canovo, while his friend paused before a Titian, whose warm and beautiful coloring delighted him. While Lord Heatherfield was admiring the group, some person behind him was pointing out its perfections to another: the remarks displayed such a knowledge and love of art, that, involuntarily, he turned round to look at the judicious critic, and his eyes encountered those of the Lady Emily Vavasour, while in her companion he recognised the handsome man who had been pointed out to him, as her husband, by the waiter at ——. Rapid as was the glance he cast at her, he saw the color mount to her very temples. He moved quickly away, and left the palazzo, desiring his *laquais de*

*place* to inform Mr. Desbrow, that he had gone home.

Desbrow, wishing to call the attention of his friend to the admirable picture he had been admiring, was returning to the place where he had left him, when he saw Cecile leaning on the arm of the same handsome stranger with whom he had seen her in the boat, on the Lake of Como, three days before. Both were hurrying along, while the stranger was telling her something in a low voice, that seemed to excite a strong interest, by the effect it produced on her countenance. She did not see Desbrow, for her attention was wholly occupied by her companion; but he had narrowly observed her, brief as was the moment allowed him for observation, and he remarked that she was thinner and paler than in former days, and that she was in deep mourning. He felt that it would be cruel to her, and too great a trial for himself, to run the risk of again meeting her, so he hurried from the room, and left the house a few minutes after his friend, whom he found at the alberga, in a state of visible agitation.

"I have seen her again," said Lord Heatherfield, "and with her happy husband."

"And I," replied Desbrow, "have seen Cecile on the arm of hers, which drove me away. A fatality seems to pursue us. Let us leave Milan to-morrow," continued Desbrow; "for I would not again encounter her, for the woald."

At an early hour the next morning, the friends were in their carriages, anxious to escape from the persons dearest to them on earth, and little aware that they were flying from happiness.

They proceeded towards Venice, staying a few days at Verona on the route; where they admired the amphitheatre, that splendid remnant of a former age, so creditable to the reign of Trajan, and the wonderful state of preservation of which permits one to judge of its pristine beauty, without drawing any longer drafts on our veneration for antiquity than may be acquitted at sight—a merit possessed but by few similar objects of interest in Italy. They visited the reputed sarcophagus of "Romeo and Juliet;" but not all their romantic feelings and sympathy for the lovers, could lead them to believe, that the rudely-formed trough, cut in stone, without a single ornament, exhibited to them in a vineyard, by an old woman, whose garrulity was enough to put sentiment and the powers of association to flight, could ever have been the resting-place of the gentle Juliet and her enamored Romeo.

Some less incredulous English—an elderly couple, who looked like a citizen and his wife—were viewing it at the same time, and the man observed aloud, "That the poor bodies must have had scarcely room enough, though, to be sure, they were but young when they died, and young people are seldom fat;" and here the speaker suffered his eyes to dwell for a moment, on a certain prominent rotundity of his person, and then glanced at one of nearly similar dimensions appertaining to his elderly wife, as though he was debating the possibility of their ever reposing in the sarcophagus before them. The good lady seemed to understand what was passing in his mind, for she looked kindly at him, and placed her arm within his, with a certain cordiality that seemed to express the hope that it might be long ere they were consigned to their last rest.

"Little did we think, my dear," said the husband, "when we saw Miss O'Neill play Juliet, that ever we should be looking into the stone coffin of the real Juliet. Well, well, you remember, my dear, when I tried to stop you from crying so much, by telling you that it was all an imigination of Shakspeare's; who'd have thought of our coming to the very town where the real tragedy happened, and seeing the very coffin the lovers were buried in!"

The old ciceroné observing, with the acuteness of her profession, that the elderly couple before her were more gullible than Heatherfield and Desbrow, directed her attention chiefly to them; and after some whispering with their *laquais de place*, an offer was made to them, of which he was the interpreter, that a lock of Juliet's hair might be had for a certain sum. The offer was immediately accepted, and the friends left the sentimental old couple exchanging their piastres for a mesh of tangled hair, whose coarse texture denoted that it had never graced a gentle head, if, indeed, it had not owed its origin to the old cicerone's; and after being looked at with reverence, it was carefully consigned to the bulky pocket-book of the husband, and placed next his passport and letter of credit.

There is, perhaps, no more effectual mode of allaying the bitterness of disappointed affection, than by dwelling on the works of antiquity, that have withstood the attacks of ages. Since those stupendous monuments were reared, over which time has passed, scathing, but not destroy-

ing, what changes have occurred in the moral and physical world! And we, who stand gazing on them, creatures of a day, are fated to pass away as thousands and thousands have passed, who have stood admiring them as we do now. How trifling—how transitory appear our griefs, when we reflect on ourselves as only composing an almost imperceptible portion of the myriads of shadows that are rapidly flitting away.

This thought occurred to both the friends when they again visited the amphitheatre by moonlight, and their melancholy became softened, if not subdued, by the reflection.

"How many men, remarkable for their learning and talents, have stood where we now stand," said Heatherfield, breaking the silence which both, occupied with their meditations, had preserved for the last hour; "how rich in names is Verona—Catullus, Nepos, Vitruvius! What associations in poetry, history, and architecture. And when the cloud that overshadowed the dark ages had passed away, Verona again produced her great men to regenerate literature—Guarini, Calderini, Valla, Politian, Scaliger, father and son, Pauvisines, Fracastorius, and a host of others. Well do such names accord with the monument before us, and how widely does their beneficent influence extend! How far may the minds of the revivers of letters have been influenced by the contemplation of the splendid wrecks of antiquity which their native city boasts! For when we regard objects that appeal to us so forcibly from the past, is it not natural to wish to leave behind us works which may bequeath our names to posterity, and associate them with the memory of those scenes dear to us in life? Scaliger, the father, has always appeared to me a most interesting character," continued Heatherfield, musingly; "a youth passed in camps, and a maturity in study, seems such a philosophical transition."

"Yes," replied Desbrow, "I admit that one reflects with complacency on his life; but how can you reconcile his petulant attack on Erasmus, with the equanimity which a practitioner in medicine, and an expounder of divinity, ought to possess?"

"Alas!" said Heatherfield, "it is but another proof of the fallibility of poor human nature; proofs from which so few of the wisest or best have been exempt."

"It is this perfect freedom from all the alloys of genius that makes me turn with such delight to our own Scott," said Desbrow; "there is a mighty mind, unsullied by a single example of envy, hatred, or jealousy. Placed on an eminence, to which all eyes are directed, even the Argus optics of envy can discover no blemish in him. Unspoilt by praise, and unscathed by censure, his is indeed a brilliant career, and the admiration accorded to the author seems but to increase the affection felt towards the man. But then Scott's nature has never been tried by censure, that corrosive acid which has turned the milk of human kindness of so many, into gall. When he commenced his literary career, critics were more disposed to give praise for the merit a work displayed, than to search with hypercritical acumen for its blemishes. His early fame came to him gradually—it was a stream, each year becoming more vigorous, to which all accustomed themselves, and not a flood that astonished and alarmed the vanity of competitors, by threatening to ingulf them. What a profound knowledge of human nature did he evince, when for years he concealed that he was the author of the Waverley novels! The praise so universally, so justly bestowed on these admirable works, could not have failed to have raised up a host of jealous foes against an avowed author, however faultless his life, and however brilliant his genius. But Scott fought for and won the high guerdon of renown, as did the heroes of chivalry, with their visors down, and the victory was proclaimed before the victor was known."

"Then you are of opinion that authors would do well to preserve the incognito," said Heatherfield.

"I think they would do wisely," replied Desbrow, "for then their works would be read without those feelings of prejudice, envy, malice, and uncharitableness, which influence but too great a portion of their readers when perusing successful works. The real or imagined faults of authors, as men, would not be mixed up with the criticisms on their works; and who can say how far the criticisms might be influenced by the critic's total ignorance of the author. Writers, by preserving the incognito until the reputations of their works were perfectly established, would enjoy all the gratification of authorship, without its concomitant annoyances, and fame would at least find them unwounded by the slings and arrows of envy, that never fail to be aimed at him who, unmasked, enters the lists to fight for it."

"How different was the fate of Byron," said Heatherfield, "who was never permitted to bathe his fevered lips in the intoxicating cup of praise, without finding the wormwood bitterness of censure steeped so strongly in it, that he turned disgusted from the draught for which his soul panted. Scott is a beneficent genius, instructing and ameliorating, while he amuses; but Byron showed mankind only the depths and miseries of their nature, without pointing out one bright vista of consolation, and left them more wretched, and alas! oftener more wicked, than when he found them. I never read one of those biting satires which poor Byron loved to introduce even in the most impassioned of his poems, without thinking of a passage I met with in a French writer—'Ah! plaignez-moi. Je fronde mes semblables, je ris de leurs malheurs; c'est une satire d'amertume et un rire de grincement de dents; et cette arme avec laquelle je les frappe, je la retire de ma propre blessure."

"Byron, one of the giants of literature, has now passed away," said Desbrow, "while the innumerable pygmies of it are spared, as the blast that bows the majestic oak, the pride of the forest, to the earth, passes harmlessly over the dwarf shrubs at its base."

"Yes," replied Heatherfield; "Byron and Scott may be said to be giants in literature, and their works will remain to astonish posterity, as do now the fossil remains of colossal animals whose species is extinct; and which, conveying such impressions of the stupendous grandeur of the period to which they belonged, make us sensible of the degeneration of the present. Should the works of the pygmies pass down to posterity, they will excite the same feeling that we indulge on discovering shells and other light productions, beneath the surface of high mountains; we value them not, but, as on seeing the fly in amber, wonder how they got there; so will posterity conclude, that the works, like the shells, were preserved by their lightness, which allowed them to float down the stream of time unharmed."

"Byron was, and Scott is, so much a part of our age," said Desbrow, "that it is difficult to believe that one has indeed passed away, and even this feeling is a proof of the power of genius. The scenes with which both are identified will be sacred, and holy spots for ages to come; and many a worshipper of their genius will make pilgrimages to them. Who can say that a presentiment of this may not have often soothed the angry feelings of Byron, when writhing under those censures, which he loved to call down on his own head, but had not fortitude to support? As to Scott, he has no need to look for consolation from posthumous fame—the whole of Europe are his admirers, and his admirers could not fail to be his friends, such are the effects his writings produce. Rare and happy are the authors who, while captivating the admiration of their readers, excite also their esteem and good-will, and this happiness Scott possesses in an eminent degree."

"Yet we have still some authors, who prove that we are not degenerating," said Heatherfield, "and I could name writers in whose works I can point out passages so deeply imbued with all that is finest in ethics, and most admirable in feeling, that the cynical censors who would deny their excellence, must be content to pass for obtuse and incapable critics. Had the works of the writers I refer to, come before the public without the names of the authors, I cannot help thinking that the praise bestowed on them would have been less chary, and the censures more sparing. The politics, the habits, the peculiarities of the authors, could then have no influence on the judgments formed of their works, and living writers might enjoy some portion of that well-earned fame, that is rarely accorded them until death has removed them from the contest."

## CHAPTER XLV.

"En songeant qu'il faut l'oublier,
Elle s'en souvient."

Lord Vavasour and his party had remained a few weeks in Switzerland, and then crossed the Alps. Anxious to see the Lake of Como before the season was more advanced, they proceeded there, little doubting that they were retracing the steps of two persons, so interested in, and so interesting to, at least two individuals of their party. They had arrived at Como a week before Desbrow had seen Cecile and her brother on the lake, but by some chance none of the parties had met. On that day, Lady Emily, feeling fatigued from a long ramble the previous one, had remained within doors, while the brother and sister went on the water. Cecile was replying to some affectionate address of Auguste,

when her voice struck on the ear of Desbrow, and the grateful tenderness of the few words he had heard, confirmed him in the erroneous conclusion he had drawn from seeing her tête-á-tête with the handsome stranger.

After staying three days at Como, the Vavasours and Bethunes arrived at Milan; and, the day of their arrival, having met the Marquesa Ferona, who had formerly been known to Lady Vavasour in England, she so pressingly solicited them to accompany her to the Princess Boromeo's reception that evening, urging as an inducement the opportunity it would give them of seeing the best private collection of pictures and statues in Milan illuminated, that they consented to go; and thus, were Lady Emily and Lord Heatherfield thrown into each other's way.

The agitation produced on Lady Emily, by the momentary interview, had caused her to faint; and Auguste de Bethune, having placed her in the arms of her mother, had gone in search of Cecile, who was in another apartment with Lord Vavasour; and was leading her to her friend, when they were seen by Desbrow. Neither Heatherfield nor Desbrow was observed by any of the rest of the party; and the sudden faintness of Lady Emily was attributed to the heat of the rooms. When she was sufficiently recovered to move, she was leaving the apartment, supported by her anxious parents, when they encountered a group of ladies, in the midst of whom, to their unspeakable surprise and annoyance, they recognised the *ci-devant* Lady Walmer. Her confusion and embarrassment at the rencontre, which not all her practised art could conceal, was apparent to all around her; and the marked avoidance of her, by the English group, was equally visible to her companions.

Lady Emily, judging that the presence of Lord Heatherfield and Lady Walmer in the same assembly, was a positive proof of their marriage, of which event she had hitherto allowed herself to doubt, now shrank before the conviction; and retired from the Palazza Boromeo with much more bitter feelings than when she had entered it. That the husband of another should thus have power to agitate and distress her was most humiliating to her delicate and pure mind, and she determined that, however much the effort might cost her, he should be thought of no more, save as the husband of another. The resolution was right, and praiseworthy, and if not always sustained, the fault lay not in the purity of her intentions.

If there be a situation more painful than another, it is that of a young and innocent girl, who, having so long indulged an attachment, formed under the sanction of her parents, that it has become, as it were, a part of her very being, suddenly discovers that it is incumbent upon her to subdue it. She has bestowed her heart, ere she had learned to question the truth of him, on whom the gift was conferred; and when untoward circumstances arise to separate them, her health and peace but too often fall a sacrifice to the struggle which reason and virtue oppose to affection.

Emily, however, did not abandon herself to the indulgence of unavailing grief, but the arrow of disappointed love had sunk deep in her heart, and though her efforts to conceal her sufferings from those around her, were in part successful, they brought not consolation to her wounded spirit. Often did the agitated, and reproachful glance of Lord Heatherfield, as she had last seen him, recur to her memory. Had he a right to look reproachful? he, who had steeped her days in grief, and clouded the future. And yet, that eloquent look, it seemed to express that he was more sinned against than sinning; and it returned again and again, to disturb her peace. She determined to propose to her parents, to make no longer sojourn at Milan; for she dreaded meeting him and his wife, whose splendid attire and flushed cheeks contrasted so forcibly with his sombre habit, and pale countenance. No; she would think of him no more; and yet, in a short time, in spite of every effort, her thoughts again reverted to him.

Lord and Lady Vavasour had consulted together on their return from the Palazza Boromeo, and had agreed that the sudden indisposition of their daughter must have proceeded from meeting the *ci-devant* Lady Walmer, and that therefore, the sooner they left her vicinity the better. They proposed leaving Milan the next day, to which Emily cheerfully assenting, the whole party were in their travelling carriages at an early hour, and only a short time after the friends, who had set out on the same route, little conscious who were following them.

"Did you not observe the courage and impudence of that woman?" asked Lady Vavasour of her husband, when referring to their interview with Lady Walmer; "my maid saw Lord Heatherfield walking

in the street near our hotel, the evening we arrived, and said he was looking pale and thin; no wonder,—for I dare say, that, long before this, he has had cause to repent the marriage he has made."

"Why, as you ask me, my dear," replied Lord Vavasour, "I must say, that I thought I never saw a woman look more embarrassed than did Lady Walmer, when we met her. It was evident to me, that she was not at all prepared for the meeting; and, bad as her conduct has been, I could not help pitying her, when I saw her agitation, and the astonished looks of her companions."

"I really lose patience with you, Lord Vavasour," said his wife; "this is always the way with you men; let a woman only be handsome, and you are all ready to pity her, whatsoever her transgressions may have been. For my part, I should be ashamed to pity such a person; and I wonder at her impudence, in going into society, where she must continually meet people with whom she was acquainted before she compromised her honor; and who, of course, could not renew their acquaintance with her."

"Well, well, my dear, let us not dispute this point," said the good-natured Lord Vavasour; "for if you reflect on her position, you must admit that it is one to excite pity, and the more, because she has been so blameable.

"Who ever heard of such an argument?" replied the angry lady. "So then, the more blameable a woman has been, according to your liberal principles, the more she is to be pitied."

"Decidedly," said Lord Vavasour; "an innocent woman is consoled for the injustice of censures, by the consciousness of innocence, of which nothing can deprive her; but she who feels that she merits the severity of the world, has a still more severe monitor within her own breast, whose reproaches are too bitter, not to entitle her to the pity of all who reflect on her position."

"I see it's of no use arguing with you," said Lady Vavasour; "but you never can persuade me that a woman who has behaved ill, is a fit object of commiseration. Whatever her troubles may be, she harrichly deserved them; and I am for visiting her sins with the most unmitigated severity, as a punishment to her, and a warning to others."

"Would you not increase the punishment where the delinquent was more than usually handsome?" asked Lord Vavasour, with a most provoking look of irony.

"No," replied his angry wife, offended by the implied sarcasm; "I would make no distinction between the handsome and the ugly; I would leave that injustice to *your* sex, who always are ready to forget the enormity of the offence, in the beauty of the offender; and had I my way, I would remain a day or two at Milan, purposely to expose this shameless woman; for if I only told her history to the Marquesa Ferona, she would soon find herself *chassée* from society."

"Is it possible," asked Lord Vavasour, "that you could be so mischievous—so unfeminine? But no, I will not believe it; I cannot think so ill of you."

And so saying, he left the room, to give the necessary instructions for their departure, wondering at the extent of hostility which prudery will occasion a woman, not naturally malicious, to entertain towards those of her own sex, who, having forfeited her esteem and respect, ought even, while avoided, to become objects of her pity.

Lady Emily disclosed to Cecile alone, her momentary interview with Lord Heatherfield, and the effect it had produced on her feelings. "You can no longer doubt that he is married," said she; "now that I saw them in the same room. They would not—could not, in common decency, meet in such an assembly in any other character than as man and wife; and yet, weak as I was, I doubted their marriage, even after Lord Scamper had announced it at Paris."

"And it was natural that you should doubt it, my beloved friend," replied Cecile, "when only so short a time before, the letter, the last I ever received from Mr. Desbrow, informed me that his friend had entirely broken off with Lady Walmer, and was more attached to you than ever. A mystery seems attached to both our fates; and even now, notwithstanding you saw them in the same room, I cannot bring myself to believe that they are married."

"But, surely," said Emily, "you do not—cannot think so very ill of him, as to believe that he is living with Lady Walmer without giving her the right to his name, or that he would present to society, a person as his wife who had no right to that title!"

"No, certainly!" replied Cecile; "but we do not know that he presented her; he may, like us, have found himself in her society by chance. In short, my dear

Emily, I have heard so much good of him, from one whose opinion I had learned to value, that I cannot quite condemn him without more positive proofs. Look at my own situation: appearances are surely very strong against Mr. Desbrow; and yet I have never believed that he is capable of deception: I should cease to feel for him as I do—" and a deep blush followed the avowal—"if I thought ill of him; but, in defiance of his inexplicable silence—nay, perhaps of my own reason—I continue to have an unshaken faith in him."

There was something so consolatory to Emily in the confidence, that Cecile expressed, that it soothed her mind; and she retired to her pillow, with a less saddened spirit than she had possessed for many a previous night. Happy period of life when hope can so quickly replace the sombre visions of despair, and the youthful mind turns from the dark realities of the present to the brighter future, which only experience teaches us to doubt, by having made us feel the fallacy of its promises!

## CHAPTER XLVI.

Partout nous rendons hommage, par nos troubles et par nos rem rds secrets, à la sainteté de cette vertu que nous violons; partout un fonds d'ennui et de tristesse, inséparable du crime, nous fait sentir que l'ordre et l'innocence sont le seul bonheur qui nous était destiné sur la terre. Nous avons beau faire montrer une vaine intrépidité la conscience criminelle se trahit toujours elle-même.

The Prince and Princess Romano pursued their thoughtless career of extravagance and folly, each day plunging them deeper into debt, and all the humiliations attending it. The uncle of the Prince died at this period, leaving his fortune to his nephew, on the condition of his taking the title of Prince Cesarini;—a condition readily complied with. And now the Princess believed that there was an end to all the pecuniary embarrassments of her husband, and, consequently, to her own liability for the sums for which she had given her signature. She little knew that the princely inheritance of the uncle was already dissipated by *post obits* to all its amount, leaving nothing to its ruined inheritor, but the satisfaction of freeing himself from the power of some of the wily gamesters and usurers, who had made him their prey. He had not courage to tell her his real position; for, independent of the humiliation attending such an avowal, he had seen enough of her temper and selfishness to cause him to tremble at the very idea of the ebullition of both, which such a declaration must draw down on him, and—though not dreading the ruin that awaited him, or if he dreaded it, silencing reflection in the round of pleasures in which he passed his existence—he shrank before the thought of the bitter sarcasms and reproaches with which the Princess would not fail to overwhelm him, on discovering the deception he had practised on her.

The indifference she had felt for him on their marriage, had been followed by contempt and dislike, on detecting that he had sought her for her reputed wealth, and not from affection: her vanity had never pardoned this mortifying discovery; and she took so little pains to conceal her sentiments, that he became disgusted with his home, and still more so with her, whom conscience told him he had irreparably injured.

The Princess was not slow in perceiving the inattention of her husband, and in resenting it with violence. Her reproaches drove him still more frequently abroad, and he formed an attachment—if so, such disgraceful *liaisons* can be called—with a *danseuse* lately arrived from Florence, to whom he publicly offered his attentions.

The Princess had made too many enemies at Milan, to be left long in ignorance of the conduct of her unprincipled husband. Anonymous letters poured in on her, couched in terms the most calculated to wound and mortify her, and while writhing in agony under the humiliations she was forced to endure, she found herself without a single friend to whom she could turn for consolation. It was at this crisis that she met Lady Vavasour and her daughter at the Palazzo Boromeo; and their marked avoidance, coupled with the confusion which the rencontre excited in her, awakened suspicions in the minds of her enemies, highly derogatory to her honor—suspicions which they were most active in endeavoring to justify. The Princess Barberini, with whom the Princes Romano had quarrelled, was appealed to by the enemies of this lady; exaggerated statements of the looks and manner of the noble English family towards their compatriot were made to her; and all this brought to her recollection the extraordinary coldness of the minister at Florence,

on the occasion of the marriage, and the as extraordinary rudeness of all the English whom they chanced to meet there.

Something very dreadful must be attached to the Princess, and they must find it out. Inquiries were made at every side —letters were written—and, *en attendant*, it was determined that she should be deposed from her usurped sovereignty over the society at Milan, and that those she had excluded from it should be received again. The few ladies who had acted with her, in drawing the line of demarcation, now disclaimed the part they had taken, and threw all the blame and odium on her, so that she found herself slighted abroad and neglected at home; tortured by feelings of wounded pride and vanity, that preyed upon her heart, and bereft of the last consolation of the wretched—an approving conscience.

It was now that for the first time this unhappy woman began to reflect on her past life, and the misconduct that led to her present misery. Conscience, though it may be silenced for awhile, makes itself heard at length, and bitterly did it now avenge her former neglect of its dictates. In vain did she endeavor to fly from the reflections that pursued her: the solitude in which she found herself gave her time to think, even to madness; but, alas! she had yet to learn to submit with meekness to the punishment she had drawn on herself. She was more disposed to oppose, than to bend to the chastisement; and the angry fealings she gave way to, served but to aggravate her sufferings.

To her brother she turned for that consolation and protection, which seemed denied to her on every other side; but here again pride met her, armed with its stings. How could she address him, on whom she had brought dishonor, and whose life had been exposed to avenge it? how ask him to countenance and protect a sister, who had thrown away all the advantages of a brilliant station, and a large fortune, and made herself an outcast from her country and society? No, she would not —could not—write to him; she would suffer all—every thing, sooner than this humiliation.

At this crisis of her fate, an English lady arrived at Milan, whose character some few years before had caused her exclusion from society. The Princess, as Lady Walmer, had been amongst those who had the most severely censured the lady in question, and set the example of refusing to receive her. This conduct had never been forgotten or forgiven; and when the lady found herself again in the same place with her former enemy, she concluded that she must either expose the character of the *ci-devant* Lady Walmer, and so chase her from society, or be herself excluded by the influence of that lady. She hesitated not to take her measures accordingly, and the curiosity excited by malevolence, was amply satisfied by the disclosures which interested malice was not slow to make. The simple truth, if adhered to, might not have answered the purposes of the narrator, because lapses from conjugal fidelity are unhappily not crimes unknown or unpardonable in Italy; but when to it were added exaggerated representations of the disgraceful *esclandre* of a public elopement, and the death of the deserted husband, stated to have been caused by the misconduct of the wife, the utmost indignation was excited. Her subsequent desertion of her lover, who was represented as a sort of *preux chevalier*, pining in despair at the inconstancy of the woman for whom he was said to have made the greatest sacrifices, was considered an aggravation of her guilt, but when to these representations was joined, the assertion that the Princess was guilty of deception in passing herself off for a person of great wealth, she being possessed of but a comparatively small fortune,—it was no wonder that she found herself deserted by all those who had hitherto flocked round her, and to the greater part of whom her husband stood indebted.

The Prince was looked upon by his compatriots as an injured man, a victim to the insidious arts of a designing adventuress; he was greatly to be pitied, as they said; but for her, no punishment could be too severe.

When the Princess Romano heard of the arrival of Lady Montressor at Milan, and her intention of establishing herself there, she felt that her own reign was ended; for well she knew the tactics of her enemy, and the effects they could not fail to produce. Lady Montressor was supported by two infallible passports to foreign society, a husband's protection, and a large fortune, and therefore a contest with her, under present circumstances, would be too unequal, to leave the most remote prospect of success to her countrywoman, who determined, therefore, not to risk a battle; but, if she must fall, to fall, like Cæsar, with decent dignity.

Illness, that excuse so often had re

course to when a retreat from society becomes necessary, was now alleged as the reason that the Princess Romano no longer appeared at the brilliant re-unions, where she had hitherto formed one of the greatest ornaments. Nor was the excuse without foundation; for her health had suffered severely within the last few weeks, from the various painful emotions that had passed through her mind. Left to the uninterrupted solitude of her own house, the total inattention of the Prince, was now more forcibly felt. The recollection of the soothing kindness of the husband she had wronged and slighted, was brought back to her mind, by the contrast offered to it by *him* for whom she had made pecuniary sacrifices, to the amount of all her fortune. The quiet evenings in her boudoir, when some trifling indisposition having confined her to the house, Lord Walmer gave up his engagements and his club to sit chatting with her by the fireside, were now remembered. The thousand little acts of good-natured attention; the flowers and new novels brought by him, to enliven a solitude, that could hardly be so called, from the select friends continually dropping in to share it—all, all now recurred to her memory with acute but vain regret, as she looked at the splendid, but deserted salons around her, whence magnificence had banished comfort, and where all the decorations denoted they were prepared for brilliant society, and not for the enjoyment of domestic happiness. They were as a theatre, fitted up for splendid representations, where the actors and actresses were required to put on their richest robes to play their different parts; but the exhibition finished, and the audience and actors retired, how dreary, how chilling became the gilded desert! Home—that blessed English word, that sends a thousand fond recollections thrilling through the heart—where was she now to find it? Not in the lofty chambers, whose gilded ceilings spoke only of luxury and state, whose walls, lined with the glorious triumphs of the masters of painting, seemed to mock her gloom. Not in galleries, where the most exquisite *chef d'œuvres* of sculpture, reflected in vast mirrors, seemed starting into life, but with all the cold obduracy of death. No, she could find here *no home*, and her dazzled eyes and wearied spirits turned from the splendor around her, while she sighed for some quiet spot in dear—dear England, where she might pass the rest of her life, hearing again her native accents, and seeing dear familiar faces once more, even though they might no longer greet her with smiles. And him—to whom she had united her destiny—where was he, that she was thus left to uninterrupted solitude?—he surely, as she thought with bitterness, had no reason to hate her. She had not wronged or slighted *him*,—nay, she had given him the wealth with which the generosity of a betrayed husband had enriched her. And tears of bitterness, at the Prince's unkind desertion of her—of her, a stranger in his land—streamed from her eyes.

Well did she know that he was now passing his hours in the society of a meretricious beauty, on whom was lavished the remnant of his ruined fortune; and the reflection, that for such a person was she deserted, added bitterness to her already deeply wounded feelings. She wept in uncontrollable anguish; pride and vanity, the two ruling passions of her weak mind were bruised, but not subdued; and every blow aimed at them, caused them to bleed afresh.

Now was it that her soul yearned for some friend to speak comfort to her, but yearned in vain. She was alone, and in a foreign country, where she had been too much envied to be able to excite the milder feeling of pity, and that grief for her wrongs which sympathy might have lightened, eat into her very soul, as came the bitter reflection, that no one cared for —no one felt for her.

Her brother, at this moment, crossed again her memory,—yes *he* must have still some natural feelings; the ties of blood never can be wholly obliterated; and though he must blame, yet must he also pity her. Then came a thousand tender recollections of their days of infancy, those happy days, when care was a stranger to her joyous heart; their affectionate and cordial intercourse in maturer age, their tearful parting, when his regiment was ordered to a distant clime—all now passed before her with a vividness that seemed as if long, long months had not separated them; and in her awakened feelings of affection towards this last—this only object on whom they could repose, she wondered how she could have remained so long without throwing herself on his pity and love. Yes, she would write to him on the morrow; she would tell him how bitterly she had repented, if not expiated, her errors; and she would pray him to take her once more to his bosom, and let her die beneath the shelter

of his roof—that roof beneath which her happiest days had been passed.

The pendule on her chimney striking two in the morning, interrupted the train of thought, that had made her forget the present, in reflections on the past; and she was rising to seek her couch, when a noise in the vestibule attracted her attention. It grew louder and louder: a thousand fears crossed her excited imagination, till, unable any longer to support the suspense, she rushed towards the spot, and saw the body of a man, borne by servants, into the apartment of the Prince. All the woman and the wife was aroused in her heart at the sight.

It was—it must be her husband—dead, or mortally wounded; and she forgot that he had wronged her, that she had never loved him, as with pitying anxiety she rushed to the couch on which they had placed him; and, by the light which now fell on his pale face, recognised not her husband—but her brother.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

"Desperate is the grief of that heart which prosperity has hardened, and who feels the first arrow of affliction strike it through the life of a beloved object."

The brother of the Princess Romano had lost all trace of her for some time, until he read, in Galignani's Journal, the account of her marriage. At first he disbelieved it; but the details were so circumstantially related, that he at length was satisfied of its truth. He was shocked and disgusted at the indecorous haste with which she had contracted this alliance with a stranger; and it led him to believe that Lord Heatherfield was less blameable than he had previously imagined. He remained for some time in constant expectation, that letters from her would be forwarded to him from England, as he had left instructions with his agent there, to send after him any letter that might arrive. Though deeply wounded by his sister's conduct, he had not ceased to feel for her a lively sentiment of affection; which urged him to visit Italy, that he might satisfy himself as to her real situation, and add to its respectability and comfort, by giving her his countenance and protection.

At Florence, he ascertained, that her marriage had been solemnised there, with all due regularity; and that she resided at Milan, whither he preceded solely for the purpose of seeing her. Unfortunately, the person who gave the address, was unacquainted with her husband's change of name.

On his first arrival at Florence, Lord Bertie had formed an acquaintance with the handsome *danseuse* who had subsequently become the favorite of the Prince Romano, at Milan; and, as she knew when the rich and generous Englishman was expected to arrive at the latter place, he found a note from her, at the hotel where he stopped, awaiting him, and requesting that he would sup with her that night.

It was late when he reached Milan; and as it only wanted an hour to the time appointed by the Signora for him to present himself, he merely changed his travelling dress, and wrote a few lines to his sister, which he put in his pocket, and proceeded to the residence of Mademoiselle, intending there to learn the exact address of the Princess, and announce his visit to her for the next day.

The *danseuse*, who expected him, and wished to receive him without the presence of her new friend, whose jealousy she dreaded, had made many ineffectual efforts to get rid of the Prince; who at length becoming suspicious, pretended to withdraw—but having taken his leave, stationed himself at the corner of the street, where he soon saw his suspicions justified by the arrival of the stranger. He followed him softly up the stairs, into the ante-room, and was a witness to the animated, and more than amicable, welcome with which he was received by the false Signora.

The enraged Prince rushed into the chamber, confounded his unworthy protégée with the most violent reproaches, and in terms of imperious insolence, commanded the stranger to withdraw.

His commands were treated with contempt; the stranger declared his intention of remaining; and the infuriated Prince, losing all command of his reason, drew a cane sword with which he was armed, and plunged it into the side of his unarmed rival, who dropped, deluged with blood, on the floor.

In falling, a letter dropped from his pocket; the Prince seized it, and beheld with astonishment, that it was addressed to his own wife. To tear it open, was the work of a moment; but it was written in English, of which language he had so slight a knowledge, that the name only, signed to the few lines, was intelligible.

This name he had often heard his wife repeat, as being that of her only brother, who now lay before him, to all appearance, dead, or dying. He asked la Signora to repeat the name, and her articulation of it convinced him he was right.

Giddy and unreflecting as was the Prince, he was not destitute of feeling; though, alas! those of contrition were but of brief duration in his heart. He ordered the servant of the Signora to send to his palazzo, to command the attendance of his carriage and half-a-dozen of his servants; and consigned to them the nearly lifeless person of his brother-in-law, with strict injunctions to convey him to his apartment; and having ordered that two of the most celebrated surgeons at Milan might be called in for the wounded man, and provided himself with the necessary money and wardrobe, he left Milan for Naples, there to await the result of the wound of Lord Bertie. He hoped that it might not prove mortal, and that the brother and sister might be comforted by finding themselves beneath the same roof.

He had given instructions that the catastrophe might be broken as gently as possible to the Princess, who he concluded would be in her bed when her brother was brought to the palazzo; but, as we have shown, the event justified not his expectations; and this unfortunate woman found her only, her beloved brother, mortally wounded, at the moment that she had been thinking of him with feelings of awakened tenderness, and looking to him as her last refuge from despair.

A fainting fit brought a temporary oblivion to her grief and terror; but soon, too soon, she returned to a consciousness of the horrors of her situation. She broke from the arms of her female attendants, who tried, but in vain, to restrain her; and rushed with frantic sorrow to the couch, on which lay her dying brother.

She threw herself on her knees by his side; she seized his hand, which was covered with the blood flowing from the wound, to which it had been pressed; and she called to him, addressing him by every epithet that tenderness could suggest, to look at her to speak to her once more.

Those well-known accents awoke recollection in the dying man; and though life was fast ebbing, he made an effort to speak, but the sounds died on his lips; and opening his eyes, over which the film of death was spreading, he gave her a parting look, in which the expression of affection triumphed over that of pain; and faintly pressing her hand, which held his, expired with a groan.

It was many weeks ere the unhappy Princess became conscious of what had occurred; for a violent brain fever had brought her to the verge of the tomb, leaving her in a state of almost childish imbecility; and such was the alarming degree of languor it had left behind, that her physician pronounced, that though she might linger on for some months, her recovery was hopeless. She would sit for whole hours, with her eyes fixed on the couch where she had seen her brother expire, as if watching some one who reposed on it. At the least noise, she would turn with impatience, and make signs for it to cease; and then approach on tip-toes, stooping her head as if to gaze on the pillow; then having again held up her hand to command silence, she would return to her chair, and fall into the same state of abstraction as before. Whenever she spoke, it was in English, of which the attendants were ignorant; and all her conversation was addressed to the couch on which she supposed her brother to recline. Gazing on that couch, while tears streamed down her pale cheeks, she would recount all the humiliations and chagrin she had suffered, and intreat of her brother to take her away with him.

While the erring and unfortunate Princess Romano was in this state, the creditors of her unfeeling husband took possession of the palazzo, and had even the inhumanity to propose ejecting her from it—nay, some of them were for sending her to a prison, as the bills she had accepted were now due, and the absence of the Prince Romano led them to suspect that there existed but little chance of their being honored.

Some of the most obdurate of the creditors even endeavored to force themselves into her presence; and her female attendants having in vain attempted to prevent them, they entered the ante-room that led to her chamber, followed by the under servants, who were clamorous in their complaints against their ruined master and mistress.

The sounds of their loud and angry voices alarmed the Princess; she looked with frantic gaze around her, and springing to the couch, on which her brother had expired, and where she still believed him to recline, threw herself on her knees beside it, exclaiming, "Save me, oh! my brother, save me!"

At this moment, the creditors entered;

and rudely approaching her, explained the nature of their claims. But they spoke to ears incapable of comprehending them, for ever since the death of her brother she seemed to have wholly forgotten the Italian language. She hid her face on the pillow, still grasping it with her arms, and uttering faint cries of "Save me, dear brother! save me!" while they stood, in doubt as to whether she really was insane, or only acting insanity.

The repeated representations of her female attendants at length convinced them that her reason had fled; and they retired to consult what was the best course to be pursued under such circumstances.

To the pity of a few of her former acquaintances at Milan, did the Princess Romano now owe the scanty personal comforts that were allowed her; and though, by the death of her brother, she became heiress to his large fortune, the individuals around her, most interested in the affair, were ignorant of the circumstance, and her mental faculties had received too rude a shock to permit her to give it even a thought. Thus, while she was reduced to the humiliation of living on the charity of strangers, a humiliation to which she, however, was insensible, she was mistress of a fortune that might have commanded the respect of those who now reproached her poverty. At moments, gleams of recollection would flash across her bewildered mind; and she would look around her as if in search of some one; but on the least noise, she would rush to the couch, conceal her face behind its pillow, and while her limbs trembled with the agitation that shook her frame, "Save me, brother! save me!" were the only words that passed her lips.

An account had been written to Naples to the Prince Romano, to apprise him of the fatal result of the wound of his brother-in-law, and the illness and mental derangement of his wife. He contented himself with writing to one or two of his friends at Milan, to request them to attend to the personal comfort of the Princess, a request that had little weight, and he sought consolation for the temporary chagrin he experienced, in all the pleasures and luxuries that Naples could offer.

The *danseuse* being the only witness to his murder of the brother of his wife, he felt little alarm as to her betraying him; and the continuation of the Princess's imbecility, he considered on the whole rather fortunate, as it precluded her from instituting any inquiries on the subject. His regret could not, as he philosophically reasoned, bring back his brother-in-law to life, or his wife to her senses, and therefore it was useless for him to grieve for what was inevitable. But to banish the troublesome reflections that would sometimes intrude, in spite of his callosity, he was obliged to have recourse to more than his ordinary pursuits of pleasure, and passed his time in a round of amusements that filled up every hour, until his diminished purse began to remind him that it was not that of Fortunatus, and was much more quickly exhausted than the pleasures that had drawn louis after louis from it.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

'Again we meet, but now to part no more,
Till death shall snap the bonds of love asunder;
For naught but the grim king who conquers all
By taking life can end a love like ours.
Oh! let us pray, his mandate may go forth,
To summon both from earth the self-same instant."

Lord Heatherfield, and his friend Desbrow, had made several excursions on horseback, in the neighborhood of Verona, and were returning from one of them late in the evening, when having to cross the road leading from La Guarda to Verona, the sounds of angry voices, mingled with entreaties and female shrieks, struck on their ears. They were armed and attended by two servants who had pistols; and having desired them to follow, they instantly urged their horses into a rapid pace, and soon came up to two travelling carriages, surrounded by eight or ten brigands, who were threatening destruction to any one who offered them resistance. Two gentlemen were kept prisoners by four of the brigands, the men-servants were lying flat on their faces, as were the postillions, by the command of the robbers, while they were rifling the carriages of their contents. A group of females stood wringing their hands in terror, their cries interrupted by the threats and coarse jests of the brigands.

The friends galloped boldly up to the party, uttering shouts to make them believe that they were more numerous, upon which the brigands left their prisoners, and faced the new comers, with whom they engaged. The gentlemen and servants now seized the arms, which the robbers had not taken from the carriages, and advanced to the succour of the assailants of the brigands, who finding themselves pressed on all sides, hastily retreated, but

not until three of them had fallen dead, and two more were desperately wounded. While retreating, one of them turned and aimed his pistol at the gentleman who had shot his companion; but at the moment he was taking aim, Desbrow fired at him, and the pistol dropped from his shattered hand, the ball having fractured his arm.

All this was the business of a few minutes; two of the servants only were wounded, and the ladies rushed to their deliverers in speechless joy. But how express their surprise in discovering in two of them, Lord Heatherfield and Mr. Desbrow, who were equally astonished and delighted at finding whom they had rescued.

Lord Vavasour had repeatedly shaken hands with the friends, and even Lady Vavasour could not resist thanking Lord Heatherfield most cordially for having saved them; how then, could Lady Emily do less than present her trembling hand, which was grasped by that of her lover, but almost as instantaneously let drop, as he recollected that hand was now the property of another. She remarked the action, and attributed it to the reflection of his own altered position, which, as the husband of Lady Walmer, entitled him not to the indulgence of such a familiarity.

Desbrow had stood almost petrified by the side of Cecile, who gazed at him with tearful eyes, as she marked the paleness of his face, on which the lamps of the carriage shed their light. At length, she found words, and tremulous with emotion, turned to Desbrow, and said, "How shall I thank you for having saved my brother? I saw the brigand's pistol aimed at him, when your shot made it drop from his hand. Auguste, my brother, here is Mr. Desbrow; assist me to thank him."

Auguste directly reached forth his hand, which was seized by that of Desbrow, who, not content with merely pressing it, clasped the astonished Auguste in his arms, exclaiming, "Now, then, once more I may know happiness, and Cecile, dear Cecile, may be mine."

"All this seems very strange, but very happy," said Lord Vavasour; "but come, come, the high road is no place for explanations, let us reserve them for Verona, where I invite you, Lord Heatherfield, and your friend, to join our supper table."

"I shall certainly wait on you," said Desbrow, "but, *en attendant*, I shall ride by the side of the carriage of Mademoiselle de Bethune, to be quite sure that nothing can again occur."

The happy and bewildered Cecile could only press her friend Emily's arm, in speechless joy; but that young lady was far from participating in her rapture.

Having exchanged cordial congratulations with Lady Vavasour and Lady Emily, Auguste de Bethune led his sister to her carriage; when Lord Heatherfield, astonished at his coldness towards Lady Emily, whom he believed to be his wife, advanced respectfully towards her to offer his arm to assist her also to it. She gave him her hand, but when he would have led her to that of the Comte de Bethune, she motioned that she wished to be conducted to the other.

"How," said Lord Heatherfield, "do you not travel with your husband?"

"My husband!" exclaimed Emily; "what can yon mean?"

"Answer me, I entreat, I beseech you," uttered he, rapidly, "is not that gentleman," pointing to Auguste, "your husband?"

"I have no husband," replied the agitated girl; "but you, Lord Heatherfield, you, who are married, is it well of you thus to try my feelings?" and a flood of tears burst from her eyes.

"I married! no, I never was, and never will be, dearest, adored Emily, unless you are my wife," said Heatherfield.

"Come, come, Emily, my dear, said Lord Vavasour, "your mother is in the carriage waiting for you, so let us be off; you'll not fail to meet us at supper, Heatherfield." And so saying he hurried Lady Emily to the carriage, who still leant on Heatherfield's arm, and gently returned the pressure of his hand, as he placed her in the carriage.

Who shall describe the feelings of the lovers as they proceeded towards Verona? Desbrow kept by the side of Cecile's carriage, who had opened the window, that she might occasionally exchange a few words with him, while her hand rested in that of her brother, who was a glad witness of her happiness. Heatherfield escorted the carriage of Lord Vavasour, while Emily, with a heart overflowing with delight, watched his movements, and felt her soul again expand to hope.

Arrived at Verona, Lord Heatherfield sought a few moments conversation in private with Lord Vavasour, and explained to him the marriage of Lady Walmer with the Prince, and his consequent freedom from all engagements save that which love for his daughter had rendered irrevocable to his heart.

"Well, then, she is yours, my dear Heatherfield," replied the gratified father. "All is now forgiven and forgotten. I will explain all this to Lady Vavasour, and though she is a little prudish, (a fault on the right side, my dear fellow,) she loves our child too well to stand between her and her happiness."

While this interview took place, Desbrow had sought Auguste de Bethune, and made him acquainted with all that is already known to our readers. When he described his horror and grief at discovering that he had killed the brother of his affianced wife, the generous, kind-hearted Auguste embraced him, and made light of the wound he had received; but when he drew from his pocket book the note he had received from Cecile's father, and handing it to Auguste, expressed his fear that the Comte de Bethune would never receive him as the husband of his daughter, Auguste told him that *he* was now the sole guardian of Cecile, as their father was no more, and that *he* gladly would bestow her hand where he knew her heart had long been given.

Desbrow was only able to embrace him. They agreed to conceal from Cecile the part her father had acted towards Desbrow, and they then sought the rest of the party, than which a happier never assembled together. Even Lady Vavasour forgot all her former objections to Lord Heatherfield; and when the two delighted girls found themselves for a few minutes alone, ere seeking their pillows, Lady Emily, embracing her friend, exclaimed, "How right you were, dearest Cecile, in not doubting your lover, and how wrong was I in doing such injustice to mine!"

Nothing now remains to be said, except that the whole party proceeded to Naples, where the nuptials of the Marquis of Heatherfield with the Lady Emily Vavasour were solemnised, on the same day that Mr. Desbrow led Mademoiselle de Bethune to the hymeneal altar.

A letter from the Marquesa Ferroni having apprised Lady Vavasour of the death of the brother of the Princess Romano, and the ruined health and deranged intellects of that unhappy woman, as also that the creditors had taken possession of the palazzo, and threatened to arrest its mistress, the Marchioness of Heatherfield entreated her mother so warmly in favor of the Princess, that she consented to write to the Marquesa, requesting that every attention might be paid to that unfortunate person, and engaging to defray all expenses that might be incurred. She even sent her own maid, a most humane and intelligent Englishwoman, to attend her; but she only arrived at Milan to witness the last hours of the wretched, but penitent woman, who recovered not her reason until a few days before her death. It was a consolation to her, to receive the soothing attentions of her humble countrywoman; and when she discovered that it was to the kindness of Lady Heatherfield and Lady Vavasour that she owed this last comfort, she devoted a few of her numbered hours, to writing to Lady Heatherfield an avowal of the arts she had employed to entrap Lord Heatherfield, and make him break his engagement, knowing as she did, that his heart was devoted to another.

She made a will, bequeathing the whole of her fortune to the Marchioness of Heatherfield, as a slight atonement for the unhappiness she had caused her, and died a true penitent, giving in her last hours an example of Christian fortitude and piety, that we may hope was accepted in expiation of the errors of her life—errors that plunged her in shame and dishonor, and which owed their existence to want of religion and moral principles. She had thought of, and lived but for society, unmindful that it casts from its bosom the unhappy and the erring, as a vigorous constitution repels contagious diseases. The past and the present were now unveiled to her dying eyes, robbed of all their illusions, and she turned from that world, which had hitherto been her idol, to fix her hopes on the mercy of *Him*, who can pardon those sins that *his* fallible creatures condemn without pity.

A few days before her death, she entreated that her body, with that of her brother, might be sent to England, and laid in the same tomb with her parents. Almost the last words she uttered were—

> "Lean not on earth, 'twill pierce thee to the heart,—
> A broken reed at best, but oft a spear."

The Friends returned to England blessed with wives, whose virtues render them an ornament to society, and a source of the purest happiness to their domestic circles.

# THE REPEALERS.

# THE REPEALERS.

## CHAPTER I.

Hail, land, whose verdure with the emerald vies,
Whose sons are manly, generous—all—but wise;
Where hearts are warm, but heads, alas! are hot,
And prudence, goodly prudence, worshipp'd not.
Gem of the west, set in a stormy sea,
As if e'en Nature meant thee to be free;
The waves like barriers guarding thy green shore,
Or ready still to bear thee commerce o'er,
Say, why has nature smiled on thee in vain,
When still thy reckless sons her gifts profane,
And give to license what is freedom's due,
Freedom, that hapless Erin never knew,
And ne'er can know, till reason points the way,
And passion yields to her benignant sway.

*Unpublished Poem.*

"Och! Jim, is this the way you come home to me?" said Grace Cassidy, a young and pretty Irishwoman, to her intoxicated husband, who, staggering into the kitchen where she was seated by the fire, became almost sobered by the look of plaintive suffering with which she regarded him.

"Arrah! be aisy, Grace, and don't be angry with me; sure it's only a little dhrop too much I've taken, and the air has got the bhetter of me—faith and troth that's all; and it shan't happen again, if it vexes you, my Colleen dhas, for sure I'd never let the dhrop into my mouth again, rather than see you, with your pale face and watery eyes, rocking yourself on the boss* and looking as if you had small hopes of my mending. If you scoulded me, or were sulky with me, I would not mind it so much; but when I do wrong, you have a way of looking at me, Grace, that breaks the heart of me, though somehow or other, and more's the pity, I forget it when I meet them boys, and when they coaxes me to go into the Cat and Bagpipes."

"Och! Jim, and is this the way you keep the Bible oath you took to Father Cahill last Easther Sunday, that you would not dhrink a dhrop in any shebean-house for a year and a day? Think of your precious soul, Jim, and think of the dismal thoughts that comes into my head, when I am here all alone by myself, and see your chair empty right forenent me at th'other side of the fire."

"Faith and soul, Grace, you make me quite unaisy; but one thing I have to say—I did not dhrink a dhrop in the shebean-house, for I put my head clean out of the window while I was dhrinking, so my oath is safe; and if it come to the worst, I would not go to purgatory for the oath neither, for I only kissed my thumb when Father Cahill give me the Bible, so you see all is safe, my Colleen."

"Jim dear, will you never harken to raison?" replied poor Grace; "and do you know that what you're now tellig me of kissing your thumb, is the worst of all, for it plainly shows me you were deceaving the priest, and me too, when you took the oath; for sure it is not the kissing the book, or the thumb, that makes the difference, but the intention. And isn't it a sin and a wickedness to go to tie oneself up with a thought of slipping out of the oath all the while? And sure the putting your head out of the window at the shebean-house to dhrink, is just the same wicked deceaving of God and man; and it's such false ways, that breaks the heart of me, and dhrives away all the confidence that I wish to keep about believing you. Thruth is thruth, Jim dear, and there is no pace without it; and I would rather you took the dhrop for months, though God knows the thought of it falls like burning lead upon my heart, than that you took such mane ways to falsify your oath. How is it, Jim dear, that

* A tabouret of straw.

I, who love you betther than ever I loved myself, and you, who say you love me—that we, who have but one heart, can have two minds? *I* scorn a lie to God or man, and you think you're chating the devil when you're kissing thumbs, and dhrinking out of the window at the shebean-house."

"Well, na bochlish, Grace, what's done can't be undone; but you'll see I'll be a good boy, and this time I'll kiss no thumbs, but on my bended knees promise, before God and you, Grace, that a dhrop of spirits, good or bad, shan't enter my lips for a year and a day; and who knows but once I'm used to doing without the creathure, I can lave it off altogether?"

Jim kept to his resolution so well, that Grace now began to think that all her troubles were over, and that her husband had become the same sober, industrious man that he had been while courting her. Every thing seemed to prosper around them: their cow was the sleekest, their pig the fattest, their little patch of garden-ground the best kept, and their cottage the cleanest, in the whole village of Collogan, one of the most romantic spots in the county of Waterford. With pride did Grace rub the windows bright, and place in them a few plants given her by the gardener of Spring-mount; and when Jim returned from his work in the evening, he found a cheerful turf-fire, a tidily swept hearth, an ample wicker-basket of laughing potatoes, with wooden piggins, emulating in whiteness the milk with which they were filled, and a plate of butter, or kirkime,* awaiting him, with the smiling welcome of his now happy wife, who smoothed her shining hair, and arranged her neat mob-cap, that her best looks might greet his arrival.

Things were in this happy state, when Jim was summoned to attend the election at Dungarvan, and Grace saw him depart with a heavy heart. He repeatedly promised her that he would not "dhrink a dhrop of anything sthronger than the Blackwather cyder, and little of that same, and that he would vote as the masther tould him."

After a week's absence, during which her mind was filled with forebodings, Grace saw her husband return, and was cheered by the assurance he gave her, that he had rigidly kept his promise.

"As for the dhrink, cuishlamachree, the devil a bit did I mind the not taking it, for the fancy for it is gone clean out of my head; but for the vote, och my Colleen, it went hard against my heart and conschience to give it to the Sassenach, when I saw the real old Milesian Repalers in want of it; but I thought of my promise to you and the masther, and I voted for the Englisher. It's myself that's quite entirely bothered, now that I see and hear how bad things are going on. Sure one knows nothing at all at all here of what's happening, and how the English has kilt this counthry by taking away the Parliament, and all the good ould Irish laws that was made for us, and giving us English laws that's only fit for themselves. Faith, they might as well take away the praties from us, and give us bread in place of 'em, which, to my thinking, would be a bad swop any way. Here was I, working, and eating, and dhrinking, and sleeping, as if nothing at all was the mather, while the poor counthry is intirely ruint, and I'd never know a word about it, only that the Repalers let the cat out of the bag. Och! Grace asthore, it's a cruil thing to be living in pace, and never knowing so much as a word of the throubles that's going on in the world."

"Well, Jim, that bates every thing I ever heard; why I think it's a blessing to be in pace, especially as it's no use to be throubling ourselves about what we can't help; and if there's so much trouble in the world, we ought to thank God we have escaped it."

"Faith and troth, so I said to myself at first," said Jim; "but the Repalers showed me the difference, and now I feel quite bothered any how, and won't be contint till we've got our parliament back, and got all the Sassenachs out of the counthry. Sure that'll be a great day for the Irish!"

"Whisth! Jim, honey, what quare notions you've got in your head; sure it's almost as bad as dhrink. It makes me quite unaisy to see you bothering your poor brains after such a fashion. If the counthry is in throuble, sure the great gentlemen that took the parliament over the water to teach it English, knows better what to do for it than a set of poor spalpeens, who only do what the Repalers tell 'em, and don't understand what made the vexation, nor what will cure it, any more than you or me."

"Och! fie upon you, Grace; is that the way you'd give up liberty? Sure, the Repalers said as how life is only a curse without liberty, and here we have been ever since we were born, ay, faith and a

* *Kirkime*, eggs boiled hard and chopped, and then mixed with fresh butter, a favorite luxury among the peasantry in the south of Ireland.

long time before, in all this throuble, just bekase we have no liberty. Liberty, Grace a-vourneen, is just like what we imagine of the grand ould times in Ireland; it's something that we don't quite rightly understand, but which, we believe, must be all the finer for that. Faith I'll try to turn it over in my mind, and once I can make it out, I'll tell you all I can about it, for I think you have more gumption in such matters than I have, bekase you never get in a passion about 'em."

## CHAPTER II.

O Liberty! the purest gift from Heaven,
That ever was to erring mortals given;
The heart and mind that's formed to worship thee
Must be from every groveling passion free;
The Patriot would thy noble precepts use,
While *Demagogues* but know thee, to abuse.
*Unpublished Poem.*

"Well, Jim dear," asked Grace, "have you yet rightly made out what was perplexing you last night? I've been thinking about it, and it seems to me that we have been as happy and continted as ever two creatures was, and hasn't our people, and all our relations been the same before us? and now you want to persuade me that we haven't been happy together! Jim, Jim, I fear you're a hard-hearted ungrateful man, and no good can come of it, to forget all the blessings we have had from Providence and the paceful happy days we have spent together."

"Grace a-vourneen, it is not that at all that I mane. I know God is good, and I don't forget that we have had some happy days; but if we had liberty, it would be quite a different thing, and that's what I want."

"And what's liberty, Jim dear? for I can't rightly make out what you mane."

"Why, liberty, cuishlamachree, manes to do every thing we like ourselves, and hinder every one else from doing it. It also manes to prevent every mother's soul in Ireland from going to church, and making them go to mass, whether they like it or no. Wouldn't this be a great day for the Irish, Grace? And all this will happen, if we only vote for Repalers, pay no tithes, and always keep repating that the English are the cause of all our throubles. I wish you had heard all that the Repalers said, for I'm sure 'twould have quite convinced you, as it did me, and all the others who kept bawling and screeching out all the time, they were so delighted to hear that we were all quite ruint entirely clear and clean, and had only now found friends to tell us so; but when I thry to think of all they said, I can't make out the half of it, and don't feel at all as I did when all the gorsoons were shouting and bawling round 'em. But one thing I'm determined on, the divil a tithe I'll ever pay; not that I begrudge the durty thrifle to Parson Disnay, but just out of charity, to keep them poor hereticks from being lost entirely, for if the parsons don't get any tithe, sure they must turn from being Protestants and come back to the thrue faith, the ould religion, which will save their poor sinful souls; and Parson Disnay and his coadjutor Parson Wells are too good men not to be turned to the right road. In like manner the masther will be saved, for if we pay him no rint, and I'm sure 'twill come to this point in time, faith he'll be obliged to turn Catholic, or else leave the counthry, and that'll be the making of him."

"Och! Jim, who on earth has been putting all this nonsense into your head? Sure it's a sin and wickedness for them that turns many a good heart, and an honest mind, from the straight high road of truth to the crooked by-roads of falsehood and cunning! Isn't it enough for poor ignorant people like us to do our duty, and follow our own religion, without throubling ourselves about the religion of others? And sure that religion can't be bad that makes the good masther, and Parson Disnay and his coadjutor, do us all the good in their power, without ever so much as axing if we go to church or to mass."

"Indeed and troth Grace that's thrue, for you, ma vourneen; but still if all them heretics as goes to church cannot be saved like us after they die, oughtn't we to thry to turn 'em? and as the Roman religion is the ould ancient and real religion, we must make it the only one. Och! Grace honey, it would do your heart good to hear the fine discourse I hard from Tim Fogarty, the schoolmaster at Abbey side, whin he was converting Dick Nowlan. Dick, like a poor ignorant creathure as he is, said that the Protestant religion was the best, for says he, 'Isn't it the *reformed* religion, and a'n't ye all crying out for reform from morning till night, and here's a reformed religion ready made to your hand?'—'Why then bad luck to you, ye spalpeen,' says Tim, 'sure the *Roman* is the only old thrue faith; didn't you see or hear of Paul's Epistle (which manes a letther) to the Romans?'—'Yis, I did, sure enough,'

says Dick.—'Well, then,' says Tim, 'did ye ever see or hear of Paul, or any other of the Saints, writing a letter to the Protestants? Now, Dick, what have you got to say?—Faith, Grace honey, that foolish fellow, Dick Nowlan, was dumb founded, and could not say bo to a goose; and who, afther that, could doubt the Roman Catholic religion being the only thrue one; and who could help wishing to convart the good masther and Parson Disnay, and the rest of the good people, to it?"

"Well, Jim, sure, allowing that ours is the oldest religion, that does not make it the best. I don't know enough of book-learning to be able to chop Latin with Tim Fogarty, to prove whether the Saints ever wrote to the Protestants, as they did to the Romans; but faith, I know well enough that many things are none the better for being ould. Look at the ould castle on the hill, with its little narrow peep-holes for windows, its dark passages, and inconvenient rooms, and tell me, if it is to be compared with the fine elegant house at Spring-mount, where the broad, clear, bright windows, let in the light of heaven—the halls and lobbies so genteel, and the rooms so beautiful, that I never could be tired of looking at them. To be sure, when the ould castle was built, I'm tould that they were forced to make it so sthrong bekase the people were always fighting and attacking one another, so that they were more desirous to keep enemies out than to let the fine cheerful daylight in; and also the poor people had no glass for their windows, I'm told, in those ould bad times; sure we ought to be thankful that we have the luck to live in betther days. Now, I'm thinking, Jim agrah, that the ould Roman religion, like the ould castle, was only fit for the ould times in which they were made, and that the Reformed religion, like Spring-mount house, is the best for the present time; not that I would wish to forsake the creed in which I was brought up, but I would like to let other people follow their own wishes in going whichever road they liked on the same journey we must all go. Sure there's different roads from this to Dungarvan—some thinks one road pleasanter, and some thinks another; wouldn't it be mighty foolish to quarrel for this?—and sure isn't it twice worse to thry to interfere with people for choosing the road they like best to heaven?"

"Be my soul, Grace, there's some raison in what you say; but if them that knows the rights of the question say that no soul can be saved that passes through any other gate but the Catholic, wouldn't it be a pity to lave 'em in the wrong path?"

"Jim, to my mind it is betther to thry and keep what we believe to be the right path ourselves, and lave the rest to God. He best knows, and we never can be wrong if we believe He will show his mercy to those who may have made a mistake in their journey to him."

"Faith, Grace, you have a way of coming over me, that knocks clean out of my head all the fine speechafying I have been listening to. When I heard the Repalers, I thought there was not a word to be said against 'em; but now I hear you, I forget what it was they said that made the heart jump in my breast, and the angry thoughts come into my head. When I heard 'em, I felt as if a thrumpet was sounding in my ears, and that I could kill hundreds for the parliament and the ould religion; and when they dhrove us all mad with the burning words they spoke, and then thried to throw could water on us, be telling us to be quiet, to disperse, and go home decently, be my soul I thought it was like lighting a great fire, and covering it over with ever so much wet slack, and telling it not to burn up, when you know, Grace, it would be sure to blaze out soon after, and difficult would it be for the same hands that lighted it to quench it. Now when you talk to me, asthore, with your own quiet, down-right earnest words, it seems to me as if I was listening to the fife made out of a reed that Thedy Mulvany used to play upon when he was tending the masther's sheep on the hills: and that same fife used to often make a fool of me, bekase somehow or other, when it came on me from the distance, it was so soft and pleasant, that it made me look around me on the beautiful heavens, the quiet river, stealing along like time, making small noise, but still always going away from us; the green trees, looking so proud, and yet returning the salutes of the wind by gentle bows, just as the masther and the family do of a Sunday to the poor people. The bleating of the sheep, and the moans of the cows, all seemed to me more pleasant, though the tears came into my eyes, I couldn't tell for what; and you were in my mind all the while; and now, when I hear your own sweet voice raisoning with me, the fife and all of them things comes back to me, and I feel as if I couldn't kill a fly, but would save all the world if I could."

A mutual embrace followed Jim's con-

fession, and before they retired to their rustic couch, he had promised Grace to leave politics to the Repalers, and to be happy as heretofore.

## CHAPTER III.

'Tis wonderful, what may be wrought out of their discontent, now that their souls are topful of offence.—*King John.*

NOTWITHSTANDING Jim's promises to abandon political, and to think only of civil economy, poor Grace soon found that when he attended the markets on Saturdays, he might be seen not only with open ears, but with open mouth also, devouring the inflated and inflammatory news poured forth to the ignorant multitude; and which produced much the same effect on their fiery spirits, that their favorite beverage, whisky, would have done, if thrown on a blazing turf fire. It took her hours, nay, days, to neutralise the poison imbibed in a few minutes from the mouthing orators, who *always* address the *imaginations* of their hearers, and *never* their *reason.*

All who know Ireland are aware, that in proportion to the exuberance of imagination in her sons, is the deficiency of reason and judgment; and her wily orators fail not to take advantage of this peculiarity. A few spirit-stirring words, echoed by shouts, can at any time drive this excitable people to madness; and the high courage, which forms one of their most marked characteristics, renders them reckless of consequences. This same undaunted and undauntable courage, that made the Irish regiments proverbial for their valor, winning for them the rarely-sought distinction of being chosen for forlorn-hope service, becomes the instrument of their destruction when misdirected.

Well do I remember a discharged soldier of the 88th, who had been as remarkable for bravery and discipline in his regiment, as he had unfortunately become for habits of intoxication and insubordination in his native village, answering a person who remonstrated with him on this subject, "Och! Sir, you are right; what a pity it is we should ever have peace! If the war lasted, this could not happen; I would have been taking towns, scaling fortresses, dreaming of glory at night and winning it by day. Instead of drinking all night and quarrelling all day, as at present, I would be fighting for the honor of that same Old England, of which we used to be so proud that it was our rallying word, and of which we are now so jealous that we are crying out to be separated from her. Och! Sir, all this comes from the misfortune of having peace, and having so much idle time on our hands that we don't know what to be at. I often think, if I had only the same work, even with the pipe-clay, that I used to have to do, it would keep the devil out of me; for when I was with my regiment I never thought of any thing but glory and plunder, and cared not a pin about all that now bothers my brains from morning till night, since the Repealers have opened my eyes. Faith, Sir, we poor devils always require a commanding officer to keep us in order; and had we but one of our old officers in every district, to tell us now and then what we ought to think and do, we would not fall into the hands of the Repealers, who are the only people, God help us! who take the trouble of directing, or misdirecting us. Sir, they drive us mad; for with a noggin of whiskey in my stomach, and one of their speeches in my head, I feel like a mad bull goaded on by firebrands, and am ready to rush on my own destruction, provided it could destroy those they are always pointing out to our vengeance. But, when they have maddened us, then to hear them telling us to be quiet and orderly, sure it's enough to bother and perplex us entirely, and I lose all patience with them. Sir, it's a terrible thing to have a sort of a heart that is ready to jump up and fight on the least occasion, and not to have any natural enemies to fight with; it makes one quarrel with one's own friends, and then when the anger is gone out of the head, one feels foolish and ashamed, because it's so hard to remember what the falling out was about. As long as we were at war with the French, every thing went well; they like fighting as well as we do, and kept us constantly employed. Sir, they were our natural enemies, and when once we had a good set-to, we bore no ill-blood; but, Sir, when we quarrel with the English, it's like quarrelling with our own blood-relations, and we feel more bitter after every fight, because we know we are partly in the wrong, and they know the same, and neither, like relations, will allow it. Another thing, Sir, is, that lately the Repealers have been attacking and abusing a man I cannot help liking, ay, by my soul, and loving too, as if he was my brother; a man, Sir, that is as brave as an Irishman, as honorable as an Englishman, and as chivalrous as a

Frenchman. A man, Sir, that I have fought in the same field with, and that left as handsome a leg at Waterloo, as ever won a lady's heart. I cannot hear this noble man run down, knowing his courage and his generosity as I do; and this has opened my eyes to the blarney, and blow-coal attacks of the Repealers; and yet, Sir, once I have taken a glass too much of that fiery whiskey, and heard their still more fiery speeches, I lose all command over myself, and God knows how it will end."

There was something prophetic in poor M'Murogh's last observation; for he soon after met a violent death in a fray with the police, into which the excited state of his feelings, worked upon by seditious counsels, had hurried him: and his death was but one of the many to which evil advice and ill-directed courage have led in the unfortunate country where it occurred.

Each market day produced an increase of Jim's moodiness; his features seldom relaxed into a smile, except when Grace sought to excite one by her playful sallies, and then the smile passed over his lips like a ripple on the surface of the clear and rapid stream in front of his cottage, while the depth below was unbroken.

Often did Grace say to him, "Och, Jim darlint, I fear it's the want of the dhrop you've been used to lately, that makes you seem so downhearted. Sure it's myself that's sorry I made you take the oath against it, for when I see you looking so gloomy, and taking no pleasure in any thing that's going on, it breaks the heart of me."

"Then it's a sorrowful day to me, Grace a-vourneen, that I should be bringing throuble to your tender heart; I wish I could forget all the vexing thoughts that have got lodged in my mind, for I'm sorely perplexed, and feel always as if I was expecting to hear some great news or other, and that things can't go on as they are. This unsettles and makes me feel discouraged for my work. Instead of thinking for the year to come, and laying up our provision for the winter, I am thinking that, before that, some great throuble will take place, and that it's no good to lay by for the future. Indeed, the Repalers told me as much, and therefore I have not the heart to work as I used. When I look at the beautiful flowers you have taken so much pains to rear, I think who will be one day pulling 'em, or perhaps thrampling 'em under foot: and that our cabbages, carrots, and onions will one day be canted for the tithes, as well as the cow and the pig that we have taken such care of. Och! Grace, isn't this enough to make a man gloomy? and can you wonder that I am all no how?"

"Why should the cow, or the pig, or the vegetables, be canted for the tithes now, Jim, when they never were before?" asked Grace: "Haven't we got eight pounds in the bank, before us in the world? and haven't I got thirty shillings in the chest; besides what the housekeeper at Spring-mount owes me for the cream cheeses, and all the hanks of fine yarn I have been spinning? So you see, Jim dear, we have plenty of money to pay the tithes, if they rise ever so much. And don't we know that good Parson Disnay never raises 'em unjustly?"

"Grace, you don't understand my throuble," said Jim; "it isn't the money I'm fretting about, as I know we have enough to pay all; and even if we hadn't, Parson Disnay, or the masther, never would distress us; but if I pay tithes when all the counthry is up and sworn not to pay, I'll be ashamed to show my face among the boys: indeed as it is, they laugh and sneer at me, and say I have not the courage of a man, let alone an Irishman, and that I'm afraid of you, Grace, and this vexes me."

"Jim honey, what you say goes to my heart—sure I thought you had more raison than to mind what a set of drunken disorderly spalpeens, like them that follows the Repalers, would say to you; and when you know you are doing what is right, how can you listen to their balderdash? Faith, Jim asthore, I thought you had more gumption in you; sure it's a pity for both our sakes that I was mistaken."

## CHAPTER IV.

"Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,
Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,
But, with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur."

A MAN must have either a better head or heart than falls to the lot of most, who can pardon the superiority of a wife, however meekly she may use it. Poor Jim Cassidy's head was like the generality of those of his countrymen of that class, not remarkable for its reasoning powers; hence he was on equal ground with his companions, while with Grace, he felt he never had the best of an argument; nay, he

usually found hers so unanswerable, that he speedily arrived at the conclusion that she was *terrible cute*, which in Irish phraseology means clever. From the moment this discovery forced itself on his mind, he began to respect her more, but to love her less; a change of sentiment, that no loving heart like hers could be satisfied with. It was the facility with which Grace refuted the arguments of the Repealers, that conveyed the idea of her superiority to Jim; it was less mortifying to think her *terrible cute*, than to acknowledge himself *terrible botherheaded;* it was therefore a relief to him to find himself listened to with attention by his companions, over whom his sobriety gave him a considerable advantage.

This cemented his increased intimacy with them, and drew him still more frequently from his home. Their enthusiasm excited by inebriation and the artful recapitulation of real and imaginary wrongs, worked on the morbid feelings of poor Jim, until he believed himself the wretched slave they asserted him to be, and that it had become his duty to burst the chains which enslaved him.

When he returned from a meeting where sedition and whiskey had been doing their demoralising work, both freely distributed by the emissaries of the agitators, poor Grace has been astonished and grieved by his declamation. "Millions in chains, a starving and oppressed people, Saxon tyrants, no tithes, and repeal of the Union," were become familiar words in the mouth of poor Jim; and blood, and bloody, were the terms applied to every demonstration of a power, whose mildness and clemency was by most people considered blameable, in so long permitting its justice to be called in question.

"Yes, I'm a slave, a chained slave, you're a slave, Grace, and we're all slaves," used Jim to say; "the niggers ar'n't half so ill-used as we are; obliged to pay the teachers of a religion we abominate; obliged to submit to have our parliament carried into a land of strangers, where our lamentations and tears, sent over through our reform members, only make the English laugh. They laugh at the brogue, instead of thrying to find out where the shoe pinches. Ar'n't we all starving, and crushed by the plough of oppression? sure it calls for vingince and blood!"

"Och! Jim, your poor head is surely turned. How can you say you are a slave, or that them boys you go with are slaves, when they are free to run wild over the counthry, making mischief at every side? How can you say you're starving, when you know you ate a fine piece of pork with plenty of greens and potatoes for your dinner, and that we have a tub full of salt mate, and four flitches of bacon in the house, with the loft full of potatoes? Sure, only I'm too unhappy to laugh at any thing now, I could laugh enough to hear you say you're a slave and starving; and sure this must be what makes the English people, who like the plain truth, laugh when them repaling members tells 'em such *rhaumeish.** Now hear me Jim: if half what them Repalers tell you, and the boys that goes shouting after them, was thrue, wouldn't it be decenter, and kinder, not to make bad worse, but to give you all good advice, and encourage you to be quiet? And sure, if we have throubles to bear in Ireland, and every place has its share, wouldn't it be wiser for them Repalers that can blow hot and could with the same breath, to make you all keep quiet, and orderly to your work, and be able to tell the Lord Leftenant, or the king himself—'You see, my Lord, how quiet the poor Irishmen are in all their throubles, they pay all they can, neither burn houses, nor flog, nor murder; and ever since you gave 'em mancipation, they have been thrying to show how much they feel the compliment. Sure, if they behave so well, and that there's no complaint against 'em when they have cause for complaint, your Lordship will take away their throubles, and put in a good word for 'em to the kink.' What could be said against this, Jim? don't you think it would be better than having murders, floggings, burnings, and sociations going on at every side, so that if we have throubles in Ireland, and ask the help of the Lord Leftenant, or the king, sure they can stop our mouths, by saying, 'Arrah! be aisy, you ill-behaved spalpeens; sure you don't know how to be grateful. Didn't I give you mancipation, and ar'n't you twice worse ever since? and now ar'n't you raving mad for repale, which is just one as if you said you were determined to do all the mischief you could?' Sure, Jim, honey, for Ireland to thry to do withont England, is just as if you and I thried to do without the good masther that supports us. No, Jim, I'm afraid there's no honesty in them people that works you all up to madness, and then tells you to be quiet. I

* Exaggeration.

think, God forgive me if I'm wrong, that what they mane is to make you all furious, and then, when all your madness is known at every side, to be able to say to the Lord Leftenant, 'Now, my Lord, you see what a state they're in, and it's only *me* that can make 'em quiet. If I say the word, they'll be aisy; so make me a judge, or a great lord, and then I'll keep them mad Irish under my thumb for evermore; but if you don't, faith they'll ruin themselves downright to spite you."

"Well, Grace, haven't we tried every thing to get our rights, just as we waited so many long years to get mancipation, which the English never gave us, nor never would give us, as the Repalers say, if we had not kicked up such a row, and frightened 'em into it."

"No, Jim dear, ye haven't tried every way, for ye never tried to deserve a good character, which, to my poor thinking, would be the safest, and the pleasantest way too, to earn good treatment; for sure if even it does not succeed in getting justice, it laves the comfort, and a great one it is, Jim, of having deserved it. What do the Repalers gain for Ireland, Jim agrah? Mistrust and dislike, instead of confidence and pity; for sure the warm hearts and generous feelings of our poor misguided countrymen, if they were really known, would be valued; but England hears only their crimes, and, more's the pity, can hear nothing of their virtues. Is it a wonder, then, that the English think us savages, when every ship takes over to them fresh and frightful stories of all the cruel and wicked things the boys are always doing? Faith, Jim, I think them that calls themselves our friends, are our worst enemies. Is it like friends to be always telling ye that ye're slaves, that ye're trampled on, that ye have none of your rights, and that ye're starving, when the most part of ye have plenty of wholesome food in your stomachs, and more than plenty of the wicked potheen in your heads? No; Jim, a thrue friend would raison with ye, and say, 'Be aisy and decent, boys, and show the English how well ye can behave, even when ye have cause to be discontented.' This will be an honor and a credit to Ireland, and England will then be ashamed not to do ye justice. But, no; your pretended friends maddens ye with burning words, that, like the fiery whiskey, puts all raison out of your heads, and anger and desperation into your hearts;—and mind my words, and sorrowfully I say them, no good can come of all this."

"Can you deny, Grace, that we got mancipation by making such a row in the counthry, that they were afraid to refuse us?"

"Faith, Jim, I can't believe it, and I don't wish to believe it. I'd rather think they gave it to us because they believed it was all we wanted to make us contented; and so ye were all saying from morning till night; ye did not speak a word of Repaling then, and them that guides ye said the mancipation would give every blessing. But no sooner did ye get it, than your bad advisers turned round, and instead of thanking them that gave it to ye, many of them, as I'm tould, acting against their judgments in so doing, they only say, 'No thanks to ye. We've got it by frightening ye, and now we've found out the way, we'll ask for something fresh every year, till we've bothered ye all, and tired ye out, and then we will get what we want for *ourselves* and our own relations, and desire the fools we have been driving mad so long to be quiet, and do as they are bid.' Faith, Jim, the way as the Repalers uses ye, reminds me of the puppet-show I saw at Dungarvan, when one man pulled the wires, and made all the little puppets jump, act, and fight as he liked. All the people looked at the puppets, and were surprised what movements they were making; but I minded the showman pulling the wires, and think of him every time I see or hear the Repalers working ye up to madness, or ordering ye to be aisy, just as it serves their convenience at the time."

## CHAPTER V.

Erin, thy verdant sea girt shore
Was never made for slaves to tread,
Though changed are now the days of yore,
When monarchs for thee fought and bled.
*Old Song.*

"Tell me, Grace a-vourneen," said Jim, "when you hear the fine songs that describe how grand and great Ireland was before she was thrampled upon by the English, don't you feel your heart rising to your throat, and the tears coming into your eyes? If you, a woman, feel this for the poor ould counthry, what must men feel? Och! the Repalers are right; there's something in our hearts that won't let us

be contint while we are slaves; for haven't I seen men, able and willing to fight too, cry like girls when they first begin to love, at hearing one of the ould cronauns of the counthry sung, with its dismal, but sweet music, and its thrue words about our past glory and present slavery."

"Jim, you make me angry to hear you talk of slavery. I won't allow you're a slave, or that I am the wife of a slave. You pay your rent, we owe no one a tenpenny, we have something before us in the bank in case of a rainy day, and no one can molest us while we do our duty. Sure then this proves we are not slaves, though wicked people would try to persuade us into thinking so. No, Jim, the ould songs have often brought tears into my eyes, and made my heart swell, and, therefore, I don't sing 'em any more, as it's ungrateful to be regretting what we never knew, (and which, after all, maybe is not thrue,) when we have so much to be thankful for. When I see a lovely evening, with the beautiful sun entering his rose-colored palace, and the trees, hills, and rivers all looking so grateful for the warmth he gave 'em before he wished 'em good night, do you think that if any ould song, or discontented person tould me that long ago the sun was finer than now, and that all I think so beautiful, was much more so in past time—do you think that ought to make me unhappy? No, Jim, I ought and would think that the beautiful sight before my eyes was quite beautiful enough, and thank the good God that gave it."

"Well, Grace, you have such a quare way of being satisfied with every thing, that it's no use thrying to put you out of conceit with things."

"No, Jim dear, you are wrong there, for I'm not easily satisfied with any thing I can make better; it's only things that I can't alter or mend, that I think it best not to be grumbling about, bekase a discontented spirit grows faster on one than people imagine."

"Faith, it's thrne enough, for you. Grace ma-vourneen, as I know to my cost; and sorry enough I am that ever the Repalers blew the bad breath into me which keeps me always upon the fret, bemoaning the eligance and grandeur of this poor counthry in ould times, when people came flocking from all parts of the world to larn knowledge in Ireland. Then we had kings and queens too, as witness Granawail, but now we have nothing but tyrants and slaves: sure the notion of it is enough to break one's heart!"

"Then where are the tyrants, Jim agrah? for sorrow a bit, much as I've been hearing about 'em, if ever I see one yet in all the counthry."

"What would you say, Grace, if you were tould that Colonel Barron, Sir John Smith, ay, be me troth, and the masther too, were tyrants?"

"Say, Jim? I'd say whoever said so, spoke what was not thrue! Colonel Barron, that is never tired of doing good—a tyrant! Sir John Smith, who spinds hundreds for the poor, without even so much as axing a question, except whether they are in want; and the masther, the dear fine generous masther! blessings on his white locks—he a tyrant! a gentleman that has no more pride than a new-born babe, and whose word is like a bond! Och, Jim! if ye have got so far on the road of falseness as to call such as these tyrants, then I have little hopes that ever ye'll see the right road."

"Well now, Grace, don't be angry, and I'll tell you the truth: sure it was not I, nor the likes of me, that called the gentlemen tyrants; it was the Repalers as said as how our landlords dhrove us like galley-slaves before 'em, to vhote at the elections for whoever they bid us, and that this showed they were tyrants; so faith I could say nothing against it."

"Now listen to me, Jim, and I'll tell you what you could have said. You might tell 'em the landlords were estated gentlemen, that had larning and knowledge, and that their great properties in the counthry gave them a much greater stake in it than a poor man could have, therefore they must, even if it was only for their own interest, wish to do what was best for the good of all. Their larning gives them the power of knowing what is best to be done; so in choosing a Member, they like to recommend one to their poor ignorant tenants who is most likely to do good to the counthry, and keep it peaceable. And ar'n't they right, Jim? And for this, the poor deluded creathures that's misled by bad advisers would call 'em tyrants."

"Och! but Grace, they do other things that's worse: don't they let their lands to whoever will give 'em the highest rent over the heads of the ould tenants, whose fathers, and fathers' fathers have been on the soil? And don't they encourage English settlers to come over and fix themselves over our heads?"

"Tell me, Jim dear, if you had a pig to sell at the market, wouldn't you sell it to the one that offered the highest price, and wouldn't you have a right to do so? And if one of the neighbors was to throw in your teeth, that you preferred selling your pig to a stranger who gave you a larger price, than to a neighbor who gave only half, but who had bought his pigs of you for years, when may be they were much cheaper, or that you didn't want the money so much, wouldn't you think he was a foolish man, and an unreasonable one? To be sure you would; and yet ye blame the landlords, and call them tyrants, for getting the best price they can for their land, which is as much theirs as the pig is yours. And as for encouraging strangers to come and fix among us, sure it's a real blessing. The rich English farmer, who takes the land held before by perhaps twenty poor men, employs the twenty as laborers, with good and regular pay; he advises 'em, gives 'em what's better than all advice, a good example; teaches 'em to keep their word and engagements, encourages schools, and helps the poor families in all difficulties, and shows us the comfort and decency of cleanliness and good order. He puts the land into fine condition, instead of letting it go to rack and ruin, and, while paying a fair rent, makes an honest profit. Often and often do I think, that never would I know what I do, little as it is, if it was not for the pattern set me in Farmer Thomas's house; and sure one such family as that does more good than twenty buckeen farmers, like them of our own country, who are neither gentlemen nor farmers, though they pretend to be both."

"I can't but allow, Grace, that Mr. Thomas and his family have done good, but that's no raison to encourage so many other English to come over our heads; and though you find words to excuse every one, what can you say for us Catholics to be paying the clergy for the Protestants? Sure it's a sin and a shame. No, Grace, the tithes is against all raison, and you can't defend 'em."

"Faith, Jim, I'm a poor hand at defending, but still I think, when you consider that all we pay in tithes is spint among us, and comes back to us in twenty ways, it's money laid out at good interest, and it's better than the saving bank. Look at the employment the clergy gives us, besides plants for our little gardens, medicine if we are sick, a word of comfort if we are sad, and constant encouragement and kind offices if we deserve it;—sure, Jim, all we give 'em comes back to us, one way or another."

"Faith, it's yourself, Grace, that bothers me by contradicting all the things the Repalers tells me; sure you can't like me as ye used to do, that you're always showing me I'm in the wrong. It isn't kind of you, Grace, nor what I expected."

"Och! Jim, would it be kind to let you keep false and bad thoughts in your poor head, and see 'em pushing you into wicked actions, that may cause the misery and disgrace of us both, instead of raisoning with you. It's I, Jim, that has cause to be sorrowful, and to think you don't like me as you used to do; for you're quite changed, always discontented, and picking flaws in them you once used to like in your heart. They are not changed, nor am I, but you cuishlamachree, (for you'll always be that, in spite of every thing,) *you* are changed. You call them tyrants that is your truest friends; yourself, a slave, that has your liberty as all can see, and are bemoaning and bewailing for things that never came into your mind till them wicked Repalers put 'em there."

"May be, Grace, you'd next be after telling me that the absentees, as they call 'em, have a right to spend all their money in England that is earned by our hard labors."

"Why, tell me, Jim, if you liked to spend the little savings we have in the bank, in Youghal, instead of Dungarvan, who'd have a right to blame you? But do you consider also, that for the fine lords and ladies who have seen foreign parts, and are used to live in England, with every thing elegant and comfortable about and around 'em, it is hard to live in poor Ireland, where every thing is at sixes and sevens, with constant troubles and disturbances, and where no one is sure of life a single day. Isn't it hard to drive the grand lords and ladies away by your bad behavior; and then to blame 'em for going? Who, that can help themselves, would stay in a troubled country, where one man can set the whole of the people in a brain fever whenever he likes; and sure those that stay are but poorly thanked, as witness the dear good masther, and the other gentlemen. When I see you, my dear Jim, that has a good honest heart, and used to be a pattern for decency and good behavior, forgetting all the blessings you have, and turning your mind to thoughts that you cannot understand, it falls on my heart like a lump of ice, and makes me

see how little an Irishman can be depended on. Jim, what makes the English respected, but that they have a fixed notion of what's right, in their heads, and will act up to it? Do you think one or two mischievous men, who wanted to make a ladder of the poor ignorant creatures below 'em to climb up to power, could succeed with the sober, steady English? No, they would only be followed by the idle and worthless, who had nothing else to do. But in Ireland, any man who has what is called the gift of the gab, who can bother the brains of his hearers by making 'em angry, and telling 'em they are slaves, may govern the poor misguided creathures as he likes."

"Will ye tell me, Grace, if you plase, isn't it enongh to dhrive a man mad, to see the police going about at every side, and on every occasion, like spies to see what's doing, and like tyrants to punish?"

"Faith, Jim. if people mean to do no harm, they need not be afraid of spies; and sure it's a lucky thing for the few that's sober and steady, to have witnesses to prove that they are so, in a counthry where the bad conduct of so many makes all suspected. And that's another wickedness of them Repalers, that they are always inflaming the people against the police, and encouraging bad blood between 'em instead of saying, 'Boys, take care, and show the police how little they are wanted in the the counthry.' And once the Parliament and the King is sure of this they won't long be left here: the only way to do this is never to break through the laws, and to be orderly."

"Faith, Grace, you're grown quite a politician; I'm surprised where you got all those quare notions into your head."

"Now, Jim dear, don't say such a thing for you're mocking me. How could the like of me be a politician? and wouldn't it be foolish for a poor ignorant woman to thry to be one? No, my buckaleen bawn, it's only the plain sense of one who wishes to live in peace and quietness, and to see those she loves, thriving and decent, instead of getting into scrapes. Besides, Jim, I hate ingratitude; and when I see, that to do the bidding of the Repalers, a man must be ungrateful to his landlord and the clergy, who though of a different persuasion, have always been doing him good; when I see that a man must fly in the face of God by breaking his commandments, make his parents and their friends unhappy, and och! Jim, break the heart of his poor wife, sure who can help thrying to open the eyes of those who are led astray from their duty by such bad advisers?"

Poor Grace's discourse was closed by tears, that fell in torrents on her fair cheek; and Jim, while wiping them with a corner of her apron, kissed their traces away. But, alas! the tears still flowed, for he made no promise of abandoning the courses which caused them; and Grace felt a presentiment that he might cause her to shed still more, so infatuated did his weak mind appear. The woman, who has to mourn over the weakness and bad conduct of him she loves, but cannot respect, is placed in one of the most painful and humiliating situations possible. Poor Grace felt keenly this unhappy conviction: and as the blundering perversity of her husband became more apparent to her, and she saw she could not even defend the opinions he had adopted, she began to despair of leading him back to reason, well knowing there is no obstinacy like that which is founded on weakness and ignorance. She shuddered as she reflected on the strong hold the Repealers must have established on such a basis; and saw with dismay that they had entirely possessed themselves of the only tangible points in their unfortunate adherents—imagination, passion, and ignorance.

## CHAPTER VI.

"In this wide world the fondest and the best
Are the most tried, most troubled, and distressed."

Grace prepared herself with a heavy heart, for her accustomed visit to the housekeeper at Springmount, to whom she was taking her humble offering of new honey, fresh eggs, and cream-cheese.

Such visits had hitherto been epochs of pleasure in the simple life of poor Grace. The compliments she received on the excellence of her presents—the kind and gentle words of encouragement spoken by the mistress, and the young lady—with the useful gifts bestowed on her by them, had rendered her visits to Springmount fête-days to which she looked forward with delight, and being passed, remembered with gratitude. But now, how differently should she face the great house? for well she knew that Jim's altered conduct was well known there. How mortifying to hear him blamed without being able to defend him! And what could she say, except what she had already so frequently

said to herself, without its producing any satisfactory result, even to her partial feelings, "that he was led astray?"

"Och! Jim," ejaculated poor Grace, "little did I think, that I should live to be ashamed of you; to hear you blamed; and not be able to clear you! I was too proud of you; and pride is sinful; so I am punished in the tenderest point. Sure if I tell 'em you are led astray by bad advisers, is it not owning at once that you are a fool? and they will look down upon you as a poor weak creature; and yet this I must admit, for fear they should think you something worse, which I could not bear. Och! how lucky are those whose husbands have good heads as well as good hearts, and who are not obliged to make excuses for those they were once proud of. When I look at that hive of honey, as clear and bright as the elegant brooch Miss Desmond wears in her habit-shirt, and think that last year, when I took one up to the great house, how the mistress herself and the young lady both came into the housekeeper's-room to look at it, and told me that it was richer and brighter than any they had ever tasted or seen, except some in a foreign country, with an outlandish name; sure it was I that was proud to tell 'em, that if my honey was better than all the honey around the country, it was all because Jim filled the gardens with such quantities of sweet flowers, that the bees were feasting all day long without ever having the throuble of flying about the country, to find a wild flower here and there, and then come home only half laden, with their poor wings tired, but had the finest, and sweetest of flowers on the spot. How pleased the young lady used to look, and the good mistress too! Then when they praised the cream-cheese, I could tell 'em that Jim took pride in having the nicest field of clover in the whole country for our cow, and hurdled it off every week to give the creathure a fresh bite, so that our cream was richer and thicker than any the neighbors' cows produced. The eggs too, they used to tell me were whiter and cleaner than any one else's and looked like snow-drops in the basket. I was proud then of hearing things praised because Jim came in for the best part of it; but now, little he throubles himself about the flowers for the bees, or the grass for the cow, since he has taken to be always thinking of Repaling; and as it's only me that takes care of things, I have no pleasure in hearing praises, because he has no share in them."

This was the soliloquy of poor Grace as she pursued her solitary walk to the great house, laden with her rustic dainties. A susceptibility, caused by the consciousness of her husband's folly, made Grace unusually observant of her reception by the housekeeper. She thought, but it might be only fancy, that there was an air of commiseration in the look and tone of Mrs. Macnab, when addressing her, that betrayed she knew that Grace was no longer the enviable being she had hitherto considered herself to be; and when the presents were uncovered, the observation of Mrs. Macnab, "Sure they are as fine as ever which is more than I expected from what I heard," made Grace feel that all was known.

"I'm sorry to see you looking so pale and thin, Mrs. Cassidy," continued the good-natured but obtuse house-keeper. "I'm afraid you have cause for it. Come don't cry; crying won't help you, as I tells my niece every day, when she is crying and bemoaning her husband who died last year; and yet she tould me that she cried the more because she knew it was no good. I tould her it was better her husband died while he was an honest, sober man, than to have him live to turn out a Repaler; and says I, 'Look at Jim Cassidy, was'nt he the pattern of a boy last year, and see what he is now! Sure it would be better for his wife if he was dead of a natural death, than to live to see him hanged or shot."

A deadly paleness overspread the face of poor Grace: she made an effort to approach the open window for air; but overcome by the dreadful images which the obtuse Mrs. Macnab had called up in her mind, she fell fainting into a chair, to the no small discomfiture of the housekeeper, who, while assisting her, murmured to herself, "Well, this is the way, whenever I speak sense to people, and think to condole with 'em, they only take it more to heart, which is very ungrateful."

The mistress and the young lady at this moment approached the window, to give some orders to Mrs. Macnab; when, observing the situation of their humble favorite, Grace, they hurried into the room to assist her. The voluble housekeeper detailed to them the unaccountable, as she called it, fainting of Mrs. Cassidy, on her just hinting the probability of her husband's being hanged or shot; and the two ladies were obliged to command her to be silent, ere she could refrain from commenting on the grievous effects her reasonings and consolations never failed to produce on the unhappy, who always

took every thing ill that she said for their good.

On Grace's opening her eyes, the first objects that presented themselves before her, were the dear good mistress herself applying a smelling-bottle to her nostrils, and the darlint young lady, as she always called her, bathing her temples with eau de Cologne.

This goodness was overpowering to the already deeply-excited feelings of poor Grace; and as she received their active and kind services, she thought it was terrible that her husband and his misguided friends should have been wrought on to believe that such people could be their enemies—could be aught except pitying friends.

"Och!" thought Grace, "could Jim now see 'em, tending and nursing me as if I was a born lady, what *would* he, what *could* he think? And these are heretics! people in the wrong road! Och! why was I born to see what is right, and to love it, yet be obliged to stick by what is wrong and false, because the *one* I love best on earth shuts his eyes against raison? Och! Jim, why cannot I lave off loving you when I cannot respect you? but to have my poor heart torn to pieces between blaming you and pitying you, sure it's too cruel; and yet didn't I take you for better for worse, for richer for poorer, which, for poor people, must mane being happy or unhappy? And now, when the raison has left you, and you have most need of me, I'd be for blaming you, or laving you too! Och! no, cuishlamachree, I'll bear with your weakness; and never shall it be said that Grace Cassidy gave up her husband because he had fallen into throubles, though he brought 'em on himself."

All these thoughts had produced torrents of tears from the eyes of poor Grace, accompanied by tremulous pressures of the hands of the dear mistress and the darlint young lady. The pressures were understood, and kindly returned, and glances of unutterable love and gratitude disclosed her feelings to her dear good protectresses.

A glass of wine having restored Grace to something like composure, she begged to be allowed to spake alone with the ladies, and Mrs. Desmond having led the way to her morning-room, insisted on Grace's taking a chair.

"Och! my honored mistress," said Grace, "your goodness overpowers me. Had you reproached me with the failings of my husband, I could have borne it; but to see your patience, your condescension, sure it's too much. I see my poor Jim's wakeness; my heart drops tears of blood more bitter than the tears that fall from my eyes, when I see his folly—his infatuation. Sure, I pass my time in thrying to raison with him, but what can a poor, ignorant, wake woman, like me, say against all that them wicked, clever Repalers has put into his head? If they tould him plain sense and common raison, sure one might hope that he could tell what it was that convinced him, and one might thry to argue with him; but, no! it's a parcel of fiery, flashing, burning words, enough to raise the anger of a passionate man and the disdain of a raisonable one, that they have poured like melting lead into his ears, and like that same melted lead, the words keep the same fantastic images when cold that they had when they were hot, and the poor foolish crathers that keep 'em in their minds, thry to warm 'em again when they want to use 'em, but never can. Och! ladies, don't hate my poor Jim. The head is gone wrong, but the heart is as right and honest as ever it was, and will bring him to the right road once more, or else I must find mine to the churchyard. Ye'll hear stories of him, och! dear ladies, but do not believe that he is more than foolish; wicked, I trust, he will never be—or if he should, then I pray that I may not live to see it;—And yet what am I saying? Ought I not to pray that if such a misfortune is to befall him, I may live to comfort him, when nobody else will?"

Mrs. Desmond and her daughter tried to console Grace by kind and soothing expressions of their confidence in her good sense and conduct, and the salutary effect they hoped it would produce on her husband.

They were interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Desmond, or the masther, as Grace always called him, accompanied by Colonel Forrester, the commanding officer of the cavalry regiment at Waterford, who had come to pass a few days at Springmount. The kind salute by Mr. Desmond of "How d'ye do, my pretty Grace? I'm sure you have brought us some of your fine honey," and the guinea slipped into her hand, prevented not Grace's observing with the intuitive quickness of a woman, and a woman who has loved, that the presence of the handsome Colonel Forrester had suffused the cheeks of Miss Desmond with a brighter red than she had ever seen them wear. And as the Colonel fixed his

intelligent eyes, with an expression of pleasure that could not be mistaken, on the countenance of Miss Desmond, Grace could not help offering up a mental prayer, that his head might be able to resist bad advisers, and that her darlint young lady might never live, like her, to be ashamed of the object of her love.

"But," thought Grace, "am I not an ignorant foolish, creature, to be thinking of such a thing? Sure he's a gentleman, and what's more, an Englishman; and they always listen to raison, and are never for breaking the law."

Colonel Forrester, seeing the kindness with which Grace was treated by the family at Springmount, and being interested by her pretty face and graceful figure, addressed a few words of compliment to her, not on her personal attractions—for he had perception to feel she would have little pleasure in listening to this species of homage—but on her honey, which he told hes he had tasted on his last visit, and which reminded him of that he had eaten in Greece some years before.

Grace left Springmount with a heart more at ease than when she had entered it. The kind and unaltered manners of the family had reassured her, and she felt that, arrive what might, on them she could reckon as true friends, prepared to put the most favorable interpretation on all her actions, and the least severe one on those of her misguided, but still dearly beloved husband.

## CHAPTER VII.

"Lightly thou say'st that woman's love is false;
The thought is falser far—
For some of them are true as martyrs' legends;
As full of suffering faith, of burning love,
Of high devotion—worthier of heaven than earth."

On her route towards home, Grace met Mr. Disnay, and his wife and daughter, coming to dine at Springmount. Her humble courtesy was returned by the kind greetings of the family, each of whom had something good-natured to say to her. The jaunting-car, on which they were seated, was stopped some time that they might converse with her, and the good rector's wife told Grace, she had bought a gown for her from the pedlar a few days before, and hoped she would soon come for it. How did her grateful heart swell with thankfulness towards this excellent family! yet there was bitterness mingled in the overflowing stream that ran through it, when she reflected, that such were the persons against whom the Repealers would arm the hand of her weak-minded husband.

"To think," said Grace to herself, "how changed Jim is! how, a few short months ago, he loved the masther and the family quite as well as I do, and Parson Disnay the same, though now—och! shame on them that turns the poor against their best friends, and breaks down confidence and dependence between them!"

On returning to her home, she found Jim moodily ruminating over the half-extinguished fire, on which was placed the iron pot that contained their evening repast. He hardly noticed her entrance, and this unnatural coldness from one who had been accustomed to welcome her with joyful acclamations, brought tears into her eyes. She felt this neglect perhaps the more forcibly, from the contrast it offered to the kindness she had met with abroad; but resolving not to show that she observed it, lest she should offend Jim, she approached him with a smile, and stooped to kiss his forehead. He submitted in silence to the caress, that he had till lately sought with eagerness, and then said—

"So, Grace, I find you have been trying to curry favor, by taking your presents of honey, cream-cheese, and eggs, over to the great house? Sure it's very mane of you, to be putting your '*come hither*' on them proud grandees that's leagued with the English against us. Isn't it very quare to see a wife turning against her own husband,—moreover a wife that is devout? Sure the Repalers are right enough when they say, that the worse we're treated the greater slaves we are."

"Jim dear," said Grace, "you've let the boodoch* get into your own good heart at this present moment; you think of our thrue friends not as they are—not as you've known 'em, and proved 'em to be for years, but as your bad advisers thry to make you believe they are. You well know I would not, I could not turn against you, if the whole world was turned against you; and sure Jim, it's a bad sign of your new friends, when they make you suspect your own wife. Look at me, my own dear Jim, and tell me if I'm not the same Grace you married two years ago—that you loved—but that, och! Jim, that I should live to say it! you love no longer. If my cheeks are pale, and my eyes heavy,

* Anger.

och! think, Jim, it's fretting and grieving that makes 'em so; and could I see you as you used to be, I'd soon look as gay and as happy as ever I was. You used to make me the happiest woman in all Cologan; but now, Jim," and here her voice faltered from emotion, "I am the most unhappy, because I can't forget what you were."

"Well, Grace ma-vourneen, I'm grieved to hear you say this. Faith, I love you better than every thing in the world, barring the poor counthry; and it's because I wish to help to get her out of her throubles that I put you into yours. Sure it's hard for a man to choose between his wife and his counthry any way, when the good of one is often quite opposed to the good of the other; just as it's hard to hate tyrants in a body, and to like 'em separately. Now I larned to like the masther and the other gentlemen about here, before ever I knew they were tyrants; and now I am tould they are so, I can't get the ould liking out of my heart, and this keeps me always in a bad humor. You think, a cuishlamachree, that you have all the sorrowful thoughts to yourself, but you're mistaken. Sure this evening, when I was here, all alone by myself, and looked about me, and saw the stocking you were knitting for me, with my name so beautifully knit in it, and the flower-pots in the window, all placed by your own hands, and everything so tidy and so clean—sure I fell into a sort of waking dream, and thought over all the past times; and while I was thinking, the smell of the flowers came in through the open windows; and when the smell of fine flowers comes near me, it always reminds me of you, Grace, and puts soft thoughts into my heart. Then the bees came humming about, with such a pleasant sound, and the birds began singing, as if they knew they were among friends; the cricket chirping in the corner of the hearth, just as if it never minded me. Sure the tears came into my eyes, and I thought what a pleasant, beautiful world this would be if every one was contint! But then came the remembrance of all that the Repalers tell us, and I grew angry with myself for forgetting, which I am constantly doing, that I'm but a thrampled slave, kissing the hands of the tyrants that have thrown the chains over me; and just as I had got angry with myself, you came in, a-vourneen, and, like a brute, I did not receive you as I ought."

"Och, Jim, one kind word from your own dear mouth can always console me, and what you've now been telling me of what passes in your mind, gives me hopes that you'll soon open your eyes to the folly of listening to bad advisers, and open your heart to all the innocent pleasures this beautiful, pleasant world can give. Sure they're ungrateful, agrah, that says this is a bad world, and that we live in bad times; if the world and the times are bad, it's our own evil thoughts and evil ways that makes 'em so. Who that has the blessing of a free conscience, can look around in the summer, and see the beautiful skies, earth, and waters, with the trees, herbs, and flowers which God has given us, and hear the happy birds carolling around, without feeling that such a pleasant world was not given for people to be discontented in? Each season has its pleasures; for when the winter comes, and all without doors looks so cold and dreary, not a leaf on the poor shivering trees, or a flower to be seen, sure it's a pleasnre to see a fine blazing fire, a nice clean hearth, with a warm, comfortable supper, and every thing around the little kitchen shining by the light of the fire, and the people that love each other sitting by it, and thanking God that gives such pleasant changes to the seasons. Och! Jim, how much we have to be grateful for, and what a sin it is to be discontented!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

"For his bounty,
There was no winter in't; an autumn 'twas,
That grew the more by reaping."

Mr. Desmond, the landlord, or masther, as he was called by his tenants, was a gentleman of ancient family and large fortune, deservedly popular in his county. He had travelled much in his youth, and had, late in life, married an English lady of high birth, his junior by many years, who made him the happy father of Frances Desmond, the young lady, or the young mistress, as the peasantry loved to call her, who has been already presented to our readers.

Mr. Desmond was in his sixtieth year, and his fair daughter had just entered on her eighteenth, at the period when Colonel Forrester's regiment came into their neighborhood. An acquaintance, commenced through that urbane hospitality which distinguishes the Irish gentry, had soon ripened into intimacy between Mr. Desmond and the Colonel, and into a still warmer

feeling between him and Miss Desmond. His visits to Springmount were as frequent as his military duties would permit; and they were welcomed by the whole family with undisguised pleasure. Indeed, the personal and mental qualifications of Colonel Forrester were such as must have insured him a cordial reception wherever he presented himself; but in the remote quarter where he was at present established, he was so superior to the generality of the surrounding young men, that the welcome accorded to him lavishly displayed all the friendship and esteem which his valuable qualities so deservedly inspired.

Mrs. Desmond, accustomed to the good-breeding and reserve that characterises her countrymen, which, if less calculated to amuse, is more formed to excite respect than is the gay flippancy of the more mercurial Irish gentlemen—felt highly gratified by the society of Colonel Forrester; and perhaps the pleasure was enhanced by the knowledge that he belonged to a high aristocratic family with whom her own was distantly connected.

Mr. Desmond had lived so long in England, that he had adopted all its elegances and comforts in his dwelling and mode of life, and its refinement in manners was grafted on the unceremonious cordiality that always remains such an agreeable peculiarity in the high-bred Irish. He loved the English, as he often declared, for many reasons, but principally on account of his wife; while she on every occasion displayed a partiality to her adopted country, no less indicative of her goodness of heart, than of the strong affection that bound her to him who had transplanted her to his native soil. While ameliorating the condition of the tenants and laborers of her husband, and giving them a taste for cleanliness, and the power of enjoying it, no mortifying comparisons between them and the more civilised peasantry of happier England ever escaped her. Their self-love was never wounded, though all that could excite emulation in habits of order and decency, were put in action.

The gardener had orders to supply every family around with plants, and to encourage the propagation of the different vegetables, to diversify their food. Flower roots, seeds, and slips of geraniums, were liberally supplied to all who wished to decorate their gardens or flower-pots; and the housekeeper had instructions never to refuse assistance to the sick or needy, but to furnish them with broth, food, or wine. Clothing was distributed to those who were too poor to buy it, and useful presents were sent to the more wealthy; so that it is not to be wondered at, that the family of Springmount were loved and respected by the whole country.

The beneficent influence which they exercised, was visible in the appearance of the whole neighborhood around them. The clean, and well-built cottages, with glass windows made to open; the gay patches of gardens in front, where flaunted many a flower from the parent stock at Springmount; the tidy, well-clipped hedges, and the total absence from sight of dunghills, and their animated accompaniments—pigs wallowing in the verdant mire, proclaimed that improvement was abroad, and that the lower orders of Irish only want example and assistance to become a civilised peasantry, instead of a lawless set of savages. Whole fields of turnips might be seen in the neighborhood of Springmount, unmolested by any robber, save the birds, because Mr. Desmond had cultivated them so largely that, with all the disrespect for *meum* and *tuum* attributed to the poor Irish, there was now no temptation to steal what all might have for the asking; while on a neighboring property, the few turnip-fields scattered around were obliged to be guarded, and were pillaged whenever opportunity admitted of depredation.

Mrs. Desmond encouraged dairies, and her dairy-maids taught those who were willing to learn, how to make milk-cheeses, so that the poor laborers went to their work with a provision of home-made bread and cheese, instead of half-cold potatoes, their former habitual food; and seldom did they partake their more comfortable repasts, without thanking the good mistress who had been the means of their enjoying it.

The country was in this progressive state of improvement, when a contested election disturbed its tranquillity, and Repeal (that watch-word of agitation) spread like wildfire over it. Their very prosperity was pointed out to the poor illiterate peasantry, who had hitherto been proud of it, as the badge of their slavery; their comforts and luxuries were decried as the cunning inventions of their tyrants, to render them dependent and luxurious; and they were told that their gardens were filled with flowers, to prevent their observing the evil weeds that were springing up afresh every day in the rank garden of corruption; and the words, "Tyrant," and "Slave Driver," were now become the synonymes for landlord. The Irish

heart is not naturally ungrateful, far from it; but unfortunately, as in the richest soils tares and briers will spring up among the flowers, so in the good hearts of the Irish many virtues are sullied by defects; and the mobility of disposition of this fiery people renders them so incapable of reflection, that, hurried away by their impetuosity, they often appear ungrateful when they are only forgetful; the forgetfulness being produced by the temporary predominance of some other feeling; for rarely does the mind of an Irishman possess the power of entertaining two passions at the same moment.

The peasants in the neighborhood of Springmount now began to view even the acts of kindness shown to them with a suspicious eye, and to consider advice or remonstrance as an unjust and tyrannical interference with their free will. Beholding every thing through the discolored medium of their over-excited imaginations, the most unimportant occurrences assumed a grave aspect. Every attempt to control their turbulence was resented as an injury, and the cause of such attempts was forgotten by the reckless perpetrators, in the resentful fury the effects produced. It is with the Irish people as with sin—who shall say to either, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther?" The first step made, the descent becomes rapid; and they who have invoked the storm, are often powerless to save their agents from its fearful devastation.

Mr. Desmond had too much knowledge of human nature in general, and of Irish nature in particular, to be as much surprised as he was pained, by the change operated on the minds of his tenantry by the popular clamor. He felt that, if met with prudence and firmness, the sea of trouble that threatened to overflow might subside; but that any display of undue warmth in resisting their encroachments, might make that a party feeling which was at present but a partial infatuation; and he dreaded to see enlisted beneath the banners of popular excitement, the heated and exaggerated sentiments of his too easily-excited countrymen. He represented to the gentlemen and magistrates in the country, the necessity of perfect union and good understanding among themselves, to oppose the unruly and misguided peasantry, and to prevent their taking any decisive step in their meditated violation of the laws.

"Better is it," said he, "to prevent crime, than to have to punish it;" and acting on this principle—a principle hitherto far too little acted upon in Ireland—he determined to await the result, and opposed the proposals of the gentry around him, to demand an increase of military force and civil power from the government.

"Let us not show these misled people that we fear them," said Mr. Desmond; "but let us by our forbearance, as long as forbearance is possible, prove that we prefer convincing their reason to coercing their persons. The laws have never been respected, as they ought to be, in Ireland. Military force is always called in to support them, and it is difficult to impress on an ignorant people, a respect for that which the bayonet alone forces them to endure."

Mr. Desmond had a large fortune in the funds, and his estates being unentailed, he had the power of bequeathing it to his daughter. This rendered her in point of wealth, one of the richest heiresses in the kingdom, and, joined to her personal attractions, had already obtained numerous suitors for her hand. Colonel Forrester was the first who had made a favorable impression on her youthful fancy, and this was strengthened by each succeeding interview. The passion she had excited in him, was the strongest he had ever known; and its vividness and increasing warmth led him to reflect on their mutual positions.

"Was it likely," he asked himself, "that Mr. Desmond would give his fair heiress to a soldier, whose patrimony consisted of an estate of not more than two thousand a-year? No! he surely would wish to see her allied to some nobleman, or at least to some person of suitable fortune to her own. With this conviction, ought he to continue his visits at Springmount—visits that could only serve to rivet still more closely the chains that bound him to its fair heiress? And yet how resign the happiness of seeing her?

But when did a man in love do what he ought to do, except in fiction! The next day saw the handsome Colonel pursuing his route to Springmount, thinking only of the pleasure of seeing the lovely Frances' eyes sparkle at his approach, and her cheeks blush a rosier red.

In compliance with all received notions on such points, Frances Desmond ought to have concealed every external demonstration of the pleasure Colonel Forrester's visits gave her, until he had made her a formal declaration. Her wishes, according to the verse of the most witty and not most delicate-minded woman of her day, ought to have been in her keeping until he had

told her what they were to be. But she was an artless child of Nature, and had wished that Colonel Forrester might always be at Springmount long before she knew that the feeling was reciprocal; and he found the wish increase on his part by observing the involuntary proofs of satisfaction his presence afforded her. He rode by her side, to see all the fine points of view in the neighborhood; and, strange to say, neither felt the presence of Mr. Desmond a restraint, nor—as in fashionable phraseology, a third person, and that person a father, under such circumstances would be considered—a bore.

I would it were possible, consistently with truth and nature, to paint Frances Desmond otherwise than as she is, or was, reader, when we knew her in the year 1832. Then would you see our veritable heroine as heroines are seen on paper, but not as they are found in real life, if, indeed, heroines still exist. With heroic courage, yet timid as the frightened fawn; possessing all the delicacy of indisposition, and yet all the bloom of health—two qualifications that it has never been our good fortune to encounter, except on paper—refined sensibility, "dying of a rose in aromatic pain," united to

> "The will to suffer, and unshrinking bear,
> Ills that the timid fill with trembling fear;"

she should unite in her sweet and fragile person all the opposing qualities that the stepdame Nature never allows to meet; and when we had drawn this "faultless monster that the world ne'er saw," we should feel convinced of having merited your suffrages.

But, alas! the age of heroines, as well as of chivalry, is past, and we must be content to represent Frances Desmond as Nature made her, not a faultless person, but a very attractive and lovely girl.

The morning after Colonel Forrester's arrival, the letter-bag brought him a letter, forwarded from head-quarters, the perusal of which seemed to afford him little pleasure; and the same conveyance brought Mr. Desmond an official document, dated "Castle, Dublin," that appeared to give him still less satisfaction.

We have frequently had opportunities of observing the various emotions exhibited on the arrival of the locked post-bags in country houses; and truth compels us to declare, that the predominating feelings on such occasions have been generally gloomy or vexatious. This observation of ours has led us to reflect still farther on the subject; and the *resumé* of our reflections is this suggestion—that henceforth the opening of the Sibyl bag be performed in solitude; and that the letters be placed on the dressing-tables of the addressed, where the reader may contemplate, between each period, its effects on his or her countenance reflected in the mirror, and endeavor to profit by the admonition thus impressively conveyed, instead of being surrounded by the inquisitive observers, who invariably infest the breakfast-tables or desserts, the usual places and hours of receiving letters in country-houses.

But to return to Springmount, whence we have been withdrawn by this digression. The owner of this mansion and Colonel Forrester exchanged glances on perusing the concluding lines of their respective communications, and retired to the library, where we shall leave them in consultation, while we return to the humble cottage of Jim Cassidy.

## CHAPTER IX.

> "Grief is the unhappy charter of our sex;
> The gods who gave us readier tears to shed,
> Gave us more cause to shed them."

We left Jim with softened feelings, attuned to those of Grace, which were overflowing with the milk of human kindness.

A peaceful night followed their tranquil evening, in which Jim dreamed that he fought and vanquished the hydra-headed enemy that assailed his poor ould counthry—one face darting forth its forked tongue, filled with venom to destroy, and the other trying to remove the poison with its slaver. Jim imagined that he was placing the crown of Ireland (that crown whose thorns have pierced every head that has worn it) on the white locks of the ould masther, when he was awakened by repeated knocking at his door, to inform him that the "Sociation would meet at Kilmackthomas that evening, and that there would be great work there."

"Och! don't go, Jim dear," cried Grace, while her face became blanched with terror. "On my bended knees I pray you not to go, and sure you can't have the heart to refuse your own poor Grace this prayer."

"Well, sure, Grace ma-vourneen, I'm sorry to refuse you, but it's quite impossible for me not to go. What would the boys think?

"Jim, Jim, what matter what they think? Does their thoughts make your happiness or unhappiness? But sure, Jim, your own faithful wife, your poor Grace, who has no happiness but you—can you leave me, with all this terrible foreboding at my heart, as if ice-water was running through my veins? Och! Jim, it's thrue I'm but a wake woman, but if the notion of what all the world put together might think of any thing I was to do, came in comparison with one thought of yours, sure I'd never balance one minute, but give up all to make you contented. Och! Jim, this is the way a woman loves; why don't men, who are stronger, love as well?"

This is a problem whose solution may more probably be found in the weakness than in the strength of men.

Vain were Grace's arguments, entreaties, and tears, to retain Jim. To the "Sociation" he was determined to go, and the obstinacy of his weak head triumphed over the pleadings of his heart, which urged him to comply with the prayers of his wife. Obstinacy is almost always found to exist in proportion to the weakness of the intellect where it is lodged, and, strange to say, is often mistaken by its possessor for firmness; he, however, is the only person who can entertain any doubt on this subject, for all who come in contact with him, are soon aware of the difference,—a difference unlike many others, because it has a striking distinction.

Grace is not the first, and certainly will not be the last, woman whose strength of head offered little consolation for her weakness of heart; and she mourned the departure of her husband with bitter tears; partly occasioned by her dread of his compromising his safety or reputation at the "Sociation;" and partly by the consciousness that he no longer heeded her prayers, though once, and at no distant period, they could stay his most stubborn resolves. Tears are never so bitter as when we know that they fall unheeded, and poor Grace felt that hers had lost their power. She tried to occupy herself with her household duties; sat down by the window to her spinning-wheel, and while her foot sent it revolving, and her taper fingers spun the thread, she murmured the following ditty:—

"Och! once I thought no tear of mine
Could fall, but soon you'd wipe it dry;
But now I'm left alone to pine;
Och! woe is me, I can't but cry.

"For you I left a mother's care,
And an adoring father too;
I little thought I'd have to bear
Cold looks, and colder words, from you.

"Och! where's the love you swore to me,
For which I gave you all my heart?
Ah! woe is me, too plain I see
That happiness and I must part."

The plaintive voice of Grace, and the sentiment of the simple ditty, which was the lament of the wife of a free-booter, composed some fifty years before, accorded so well with her present feelings, as to renew her tears. She left her wheel, and, drying her eyes, stood at the open door, trusting that the fine day and elegant prospect, as she called it, might divert her.

It was one of those beautiful, calm, sunshiny days, when the sky is one unbroken sheet of blue, and the clear waters that reflect it seem to give back its azure tint in sparkling brilliancy; the trees were scarcely agitated by the air, and yet there was a lightness and freshness in the atmosphere, that brought relief to the feverish brow and heated eyes of poor Grace.

"Sure he'll have a beautiful day for his walk across the mountain," thought Grace, reverting with true feminine feeling to *him* who occupied all her thoughts. "How strange it is that I can't see a fine day, a clear blue sky, or the beautiful trees looking down at themselves in the river, but it makes me think of Jim. Sure this is mighty quare; I wonder if the quality have such notions. I wonder if Miss Desmond thinks of the Curnel when she sees every thing looking so elegant about her; but I suppose she has too many fine thoughts in her head to have room for all the loving ones that's in mine, for sure the love and liking is the chief comfort of the poor, and the rich have so many other comforts, that they can't enjoy this as we do; and yet for all this, faith, the dear young lady looked as foolish at the Curnel as I used to do at Jim before he axed me to marry him."

## CHAPTER X.

"Oh! grief hath changed me since you saw me last,
And careful hours, with Time's deformed hand,
Have written strange defeatures in my face."

Grace's soliloquy was interrupted by the arrival of Larry M'Swigger, an old neighbor of her father's, who, happening to be in that part of the country, came to see her.

"Then how are you, Mistress Cas-

sidy?" demanded Larry, saluting Grace with a cordial shake of the hand and a kiss on the cheek. "Sure it's myself that's glad to see you anyways, for the sight of you is good for sore eyes; and, faith, mine has a good right to be sore, for sure I've had salt tears in 'em enough to salt a leg of pork—ay, faith, a whole side of pork, this last three months."

"Indeed, and I'm sorry for your throuble, Larry," answered Grace. "I heard, sure enough, that you lost your poor woman some time ago, but I thought that as you had'nt seen her for a long while, maybe you had got used to living without her."

"Och! then, Mistress Cassidy, how can you, who have a tinder heart, be after saying such a thing to me? Sure it's the being such a long while without seeing my poor Molly, that makes me in all this throuble. If we had been living dacently and rispectably together, quarrelling every day, like most other married couples, I might soon get over my grief, and think, perhaps, her going before me on the long road was all for the better; but it's so long since I parted from the creathure, and she had gone so clear and clane out of my head for so many years, that now I know she is dead, faith, she comes back into my mind for all the world as she was whin I first married her, and I can't for the life of me dhrive her away. She is always before me, with her purty coal-black hair, her cheeks like two red apples, and her roguish eyes laughing in her head; and sure isn't this enough to break the heart of me? If I saw her as she was latterly, sure I could not have such false notions, for then I'd know that it was a poor ugly ould woman that was dead, instead of a sprightly, purty girl; but it's all in vain for me to be thrying to remember how she looked before I parted from her, when we used to be fighting and squabbling all day bekase I'd take the dhrop, and that I used to think she looked like the north side of a crab-tree, so sour and contrairy when I came home. No, faith, Mrs. Cassidy, all this is gone clane out of my mind, and I'm just grieving my heart out for the clane, sprightly Colleen dhas I was once so fond of, instead of thinking of the poor ould woman that's gone to her long home. Then whin I thry to comfort myself by rimimbering the nicknames and bitter words she used to say to me, I can't bring one of 'em fresh into my thoughts, but all the loving words is always coming into my ears; and aren't I obliged to go and look at myself in that bit of looking-glass I've got, to prove I'm not the buckaleen bawn, and the clane, tidy boy that poor Molly used to call me in ould times; and whin I see the ould wizen face of me in the glass, and all the wrinkles falling out about my eyes like an ould stocking about the heels of a beggar-man, faith, I don't know whether to laugh or cry, I feel so quare. Och! Mistress Cassidy, sure it's a droll thing to have the thoughts and loving notions I had forty years ago all coming back young and fresh into my heart, for all the world as if they had been asleep ever since, and to see the ould face and the ould body outside, that is like a cabin falling to ruin, and the inside so fresh. All this comes from poor Molly's dying: sure it has brought grief and throuble on me any way."

"Indeed, Larry, I feel for you, and am sorry for your poor wife. Won't you break bread in the house, for lucksake?"

"I won't refuse you, Mistress Cassidy, for sure enough the ould saying is thrue, sorrow is dry, and I'll be glad enough to take a glass of whatever you give me, while I tell you the rest of my throubles."

While Larry M'Swigger partook of the repast Grace laid before him, to which he did ample honor, washing it down with repeated draughts of cider, he continued his narrative in the following words:

"Maybe you'd be thinking, Mistress Cassidy, that it was throuble enough for me to lose poor Molly *once* by death; but what will you say when I tell you I have lost her three times?"

Grace's countenance expressed the astonishment to which she was going to give utterance, when Larry emphatically exclaimed, "*Whisht!*" the Irish word for silence, and thus continued: "Whisht! don't stop or hinder me till I've told you all; for if you do, the story is so long, that I won't have finished it this blessed night."

The threat produced the desired effect on Grace, who, though her curiosity was somewhat excited, had no desire that the narrative or the narrator should continue until night.

"Well, then, to begin at the beginning, Mistress Cassidy. Sure when myself heard from Dublin that poor Molly had died in the hospital, and that she begged with her last words that I'd take her home, and bury her dacently among her people, and not lave her to lie among strangers in Dublin—sure I promised before God and man, that I'd neither stop nor stay till I'd bring her home; so I took a car, and put a

good feather-bed in it, and put sallys and kippins about it, and covered it with a fine stuff quilt, till I made it into as ilegant a chaise-marine as ever you set your eyes on, for I was determined the poor creathure should have every thing dacent for her journey home, and that the rain should not come to her. Well, I took old Baucherem, my horse, that drew the car quite aisy and comfortable, and faith we arrived in Dublin the sixteenth day.

"I went the next morning to the hospital. They showed me the grave where poor Molly was put in, and I took the coffin and all, just as it was, put it in my chaise-marine, and packed up half-a-dozen bottles of parliament whiskey with it, just to refresh me on the road, and to keep the throuble out of my heart. When the night was falling, I didn't quite like to be all alone with poor Molly, so I made ould Baucherem gallop while ever I could; and to hear the coffin rattling against the car, faith, it was very awful! But at last the coffin seemed to be fixed quite steady, for I heard no more noise; and when I came to the public-house where we were to stop for the night, and tould 'em who was in the chaise-marine, sure they wint out to help me to bring Molly into a dacent room, that we might wake her genteelly, when the devil a bit of poor Molly was there; and we found the rungs of the car behind broken clane away, so I guessed the coffin must have fallen on the road. This I call the second time of losing poor Molly, and we had eleven miles to go before we found her again.

"Well, to make a long story short, at last I arrived at her own place, and I had got so used to having the poor creathure with me, that many's the shanahos about ould times I had with her on the road. I tould her every thing that had happened ever since she went away, and often I thought, Mistress Cassidy, that poor Molly must be grately altered to let me have all the talk to myself. Sure when I reflected I had not behaved genteelly to her for so many years, in never sending her any thing, not so much as a scratch of a pen, faith, I thought I'd make up for it, and I axed her pardon, and said every thing that was dacent and comfortable to her, to make her mind and my own aisy.

"Well, sure there was Nelly Lynch, an old gossip of Molly's, at Cappoquin; and when I was waking Molly the night before I was to bury her, sure Nelly and I took a glass too much in dhrinking a happy and a blessed rest to poor Molly, and Nelly takes it into her head that we should open the coffin, and look at poor Molly. No sooner said than done; but just think what I felt when I saw a bald head and an ugly ould face, no more like Molly's than I'm like what I was. 'Sure,' says I, 'this never can be my Molly—she that was such a purty, clane, sprightly girl!' 'Well,' says Nelly, 'that baits everything. Here you are thrying to conceit an ould woman of past sixty into a purty clane girl,' and Nelly was quite affronted like, bekase I wanted to prove that Molly was once too handsome to be like the ugly ould creature in the coffin.

"She looked at her again and again, and said she'd know her amongst a thousand, for that she was not a bit changed. This vexed me, and I went up quite close to the coffin, with a candle in my hand, and looking close to the corpse, I said, 'Well, Mistress Lynch,' fer I was too angry to call her Nelly, 'maybe you'd be for telling me that my poor wife had gray whiskers, and a beard twice as thick and hard as my own, for here they are.' She was thrying to persuade me that she had, and that this was still Molly, when, in my passion, I lifted up the winding-sheet, and there was—not Molly, sure enough, but a poor ould soldier with a wooden-leg, and covered over with the marks of wounds. This was what I call losing Molly a third time, and after all the expinse and throuble I had to bring her down. And to think of my opening my heart and telling my secrets to a stranger, and a man too, instead of my poor woman.

"But great as my grief and disappointment was, still it was a comfort to show Nelly Lynch that my poor wife was not grown an ugly, ould, bald-headed creathure; and now I'll always maintain, in spite of her teeth, that Molly died a clane, purty, sprightly girl, the notion of which puts the envious, jealous creathure out of her wits. I buried the poor ould soldier dacently, and as I never can have money enough to go to Dublin again to bring down Molly to lie among her people, faith, she must take the will for the deed, and be contint where she is. And for my part, Mistress Cassidy, now that I have not seen her so long, and never did see her as a corpse, I have the satisfaction, and a grate one it is, if you believe me, of thinking of her only as she was forty years ago, and that makes me feel quite young myself into the bargain."

The long narrative of Larry M'Swigger

had beguiled the time of poor Grace, and he left her, promising another visit at no distant day.

## CHAPTER XI.

"Dans les conseils d'un état, il ne faut pas tant regarder ce qu'on doit faire, que ce qu'on peut faire."

THE letter that clouded the brow of Mr. Desmond came from the Secretary for Ireland; it detailed the exaggerated accounts received at the Castle, and the anxiety of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to ascertain whether such reports were correct, and what steps the resident gentry considered would be most likely to establish peace and good understanding in the country. Mr. Desmond made Colonel Forrester acquainted with its contents, who, in return, laid before him the letter from the General commanding his district, urging the necessity of keeping the troops always on the alert, and the officers at their posts.

"How, my dear young friend," said Mr. Desmond, "shall I answer this unanswerable letter? There is so much truth mingled with the misrepresentations that have gone to the Castle, that it is difficult to draw the line between what to believe or disbelieve. Judging by the actions of our poor misguided peasantry, the statements sent to his Excellency may be borne out, for, alas! we all know that the *actions* of Irishmen are the *avant-couriers* of their intentions, instead of being, as in sober England, the followers; and if they are judged by them, then must they be condemned. A prejudiced judge for or against might find sufficient evidence to acquit or condemn them; while I, who am impartial, see *much* to lament, *much* to blame, and if the country was freed from the hateful influence of agitators, *little* to fear. But how to suggest the remedy, how to cut the Gordian-knot of habitual misrule; how solve that enigma, more difficult than that of the sphynx, and which has puzzled every statesman for centuries to expound, namely—what is the best plan to govern Ireland peaceably? First, get rid of agitators—buy them at any price; for as well may a physician endeavor to bring back health to the system of a patient dying of fever, without having unseated the disease, as a government attempt to restore peace and good order to this country, until its moral typhus, so much more fatal than all the physical fevers that ever attacked it, is subdued. But while the government is deliberating, the evil gains ground. This very day there is a meeting of the association held at Kilmackthomas, where the seeds of discontent and dissension will be widely disseminated in the fruitful soil of the inflammable minds of the people, to bring forth an abundant harvest of mischief at no distant day. I hope, my dear Colonel, that I need not impress on your mind the prudence of not placing your brave troops too much at the beck of the alarmists. All collision between the people and the military leads to evil, and should only be had recourse to in cases of absolute necessity; but here, in this unhappy, and, alas! wilfully unhappy country, where every district presents opposing factions and interests, and where the good of the many is sacrificed to the advantage of the few, it is most difficult for a military man to know how to steer his course, and impossible to avoid being thought too lenient by the alarmists, and too severe by the disaffected. I shall go to Dublin, and reply in person to the letter from the Castle; and as I am no jobber and have no object at heart, except the interest and welfare of my poor country, I shall be listened to with attention."

Mr. Desmond left the library to prepare for his departure, and Colonel Forrester sought the boudoir of Mrs. Desmond, where he knew he was certain of finding the fair Frances, pursuing her accustomed occupations of reading, working, or drawing, by the side of her mother.

Mr. Desmond ascertained that the meeting of Kilmackthomas passed off more peaceably than he had expected, though, as usual, inflammatory language had excited the passions of the people, who returned to their homes, bearing in their minds the seeds of discontent and sedition, ready to fructify into acts of hostility on the first occasion. He found that nearly the whole of his tenantry had attended the meeting, and were as loud and animated in their plaudits of the hyperbolical speeches of the popular speaker, as if they had personally experienced all the miseries arising from the tyranny and oppression which the artful demagogue so glowingly depicted.

The good man felt grieved at their ingratitude, and sighed to think that a long life, passed in a conscientious and zealous discharge of the duties of a resident landlord, had made so little impression on

their ductile feelings, and that the spirit stirring *words* of the Repealers could efface the *deeds* of the friend. It is such examples of ingratitude that wean people, less resolute than Mr. Desmond in virtue and forbearance, from the discharge of their patriotic duties; and send many a well-intentioned man, an absentee to other countries, where property and life are secured on a more solid basis than the impulses of passion, which madden into fury, or melt into regret, at the mandates of the factious exciter of the day, whoever he may happen to be.

"How long have I defended these misguided people," said Mr. Desmond, "and maintained that good treatment was all they required to render them good and happy! What have I left undone? And yet they now turn from my counsel as if I had been the most negligent of all the absentee landlords—nay, resent my offering them good advice, as if it was an encroachment on their personal liberty. 'Divide and govern,' may well serve as the motto of the Repealers, for they have broken asunder all the ties of good-will between landlord and tenant; mutual confidence is destroyed, and their interests, which are and must be inseparable, now only seem as a chain, that holds together natural enemies instead of friends—a state of things that cannot last long, and must end in ruin to both."

The mob, like the ocean, is very seldom agitated without some cause superior and exterior to itself; but, to continue the simile, both are capable of doing the *greatest* mischief, after the cause which *first* set them in motion has ceased to act. He must be determined to shut his eyes and his ears against conviction, who is prepared to deny that Ireland has not had grievous cause for discontent; but he must be equally blind, who does not see that the time and money frittered away in quelling the tumults, which have been the *effects* of a long period of misrule; might have done much towards removing the cause, and that the persons who excite the violence of the people retard the amelioration which the justice of England is disposed to grant them.

How large a portion of every session of Parliament is occupied in debates on measures of severity, and modes of punishment, which might be so much better employed in devising means of rendering severity and punishment unnecessary! But violence demands to be checked, and the consequences of the evil that has existed in Ireland, for centuries, occupy the time that ought to be filled in removing the original cause, until Ireland and the Irish become

> "Words of fear,
> Unpleasing to each *member's* ear."

What has given power to agitators? Misrule. And what will most effectually destroy their influence?—the removal of the just grounds of discontent. Let the people be made to understand that their tranquillity and orderly conduct will insure attention to their grievances, and consideration as to the means of redressing them; and this instruction will do more towards opening their eyes to the folly of their violence, than the most harsh though necessary laws. He would be, indeed, a true friend to Ireland, who would use his influence over her excitable sons, in impressing on their minds a respect for the laws, and a horror for the acts of blood-stained cruelty that have so often sullied them. Such a man might be proud of his empire over them, when he could boast that he found his countrymen savages and left them men.

## CHAPTER XII.

> "Qui ne sent rien, parle à merveille;
> Doutes d'un amant rempli d'esprit;
> C'est ton cœur, et non ton oreille,
> Qui doit écouter ce qu'il dit."

We left Colonel Forrester entering the boudoir of Mrs. Desmond. He seated himself by Frances, who was engaged in copying a bouquet, placed in a vase on the table; the flowers had been gathered that morning by Colonel Forrester, who presented them to Frances, and he felt flattered by observing the interest with which she was perpetuating their lovely hues on the paper before her.

"What a delightful and enviable talent you possess, "Miss Desmond," said the Colonel, "in thus being able to fix the evanescent beauty of those bright but frail flowers, and to retain the shadow when the substance shall have passed away. When I gathered them this morning, their leaves sparkling with dew, I thought how soon they must fade and wither, and that a few hours would behold them robbed of all their beauty. I did not think that I should see them transfixed on paper, as blooming and as fair as when I culled

them, and borrowing from your pencil an immortality that Nature has denied them. How admirably you have colored the petals of the rose! it looks as if the next zephyr's breath might send it floating in the air—how I wish it was mine!"

The cheeks of Frances almost rivalled the rose she was copying, at this address, and became still more suffused when her mother replied, "I am sure Frances will have great pleasure in giving it to you."

"Certainly," said Frances, "but it is hardly worth offering. I have some drawings that are better."

"Oh! no, let me have this," said Colonel Forrester; "I prefer it to all others."

A certain bashful consciousness betrayed that Frances knew why he preferred it.

"I never," said Frances, "pluck a bouquet without a sort of melancholy feeling of how short must be the duration of the beauties that tempted me to make it mine. I believe this is a sentiment partaken of in common with every one who can feel; for we find it expressed in all languages, and in all times; and its generality deducts nothing from its truth. Nay, I rather think that it adds to its intensity, as in experiencing what has been thought by so many, the bond of union that binds us to our species is strengthened, and we recognise the universal sympathy."

"I remember," said Colonel Forrester, "having seen a beautiful album in France, that was displayed to me as the *ne plus ultra* of sentimentality. It was entitled '*La Guirlande de Julié*,' and contained copies of the bouquets presented to her each day by her lover during his courtship. The flowers were elaborately painted by the first artists of the day, and the verses that accompanied them were quite as labored; those of the lower perhaps less so than the others, but still showing that the imagination had more share in the affair than the heart. Of all displays, that of sentimentality is the one I feel the least disposed to pardon," continued Colonel Forrester, "because it shows a premeditation incompatible with real feeling. False sentiment *affichés*, but true sentiment betrays itself; and I am inclined to doubt whether the hymeneal wreath of Julie contained as gay flowers as those painted in the exotic garland; and whether Le Duc de Penthievre was not more formed for a lover than a husband. I remember an acquaintance of mine, a young Frenchman, who wore the ignoble chains of a *Déesse de Theatre*, and who, during the *grande passion*, collected the bouquets and *guirlandes* showered on his favorite every night that she acted, and preserved them in an *armoire*. He displayed them to me, and seemed disappointed that I showed no sentiment on the occasion. To me they smelt of the lamps, and brought back set phrases, artificial looks, and an applauding audience, whose plaudits stamped as public property that which a lover, to have any allusion, must wish to consider private; and with such souvenirs, the withered flowers looked as meretricious as the goddess to whom they had been dedicated. The '*Guirlande de Julie*,' copied by paid hands, and the verses written by wit instead of passion, excited much the same feeling. Had the loved or the lover copied the flowers, then I would have owned the 'soft impeachment;' as it was, I felt impenetrable. But here am I talking of flowers and sentiments when I ought to be endeavoring to forget both, as what makes me feel the charms of one and the other must be abandoned, for I must leave Springmount."

"Leave Springmount!" exclaimed Frances, and her cheek lost its rosy hue; "why, when do you go?" Then, as if sensible of the feeling her abrupt questions betrayed, she added, "I hope you are not obliged to leave us so very soon."

At this moment a servant entered, to announce that Mr. Desmond wished to speak with Mrs. Desmond in the library. The lovers were left alone, and the heightened color and agitated breathing of Frances showed how much she felt the delicacy and awkwardness of their position. Colonel Forrester detected all that was passing in her mind, and, with the intuitive tact that belongs to true passion, saw that he must be explicit, or else leave her under the mortifying conviction that she had revealed a preference unsought by him who had excited it.

To avow the sentiment she had inspired, and the motives that prevented his declaring them to her before, was the business of a few minutes. With the candor and simplicity that marked all her actions and thoughts, Frances Desmond confessed that his avowal gave her pleasure, and that she believed her father and mother loved her too well to disapprove her choice. She added that she had never concealed a thought from them, and, therefore, wished that he should make them acquainted with his feelings.

We will pass over all the lover-like raptures of Colonel Forrester, and the chastened delight with which Frances listened

to them, until Mrs. Desmond entered, on which Frances having hastily retired, the lover opened the state of his heart to the mother of his beloved, and was listened to with nearly as much complacency as he had been by the daughter.

A mother, who feels as a mother ought, hears the first avowal of a passion excited by her child, with much of the same trembling anxiety with which she heard the first declaration of love for herself. Her daughter is a dearer self; one in whom she sees her youth renewed. She has the same sensitiveness for her, rendered more acute by experience. The mingled feelings of pleasure at the admiration excited, and the anxiety for the future, with the always painful vista of separation, produce an agitation even more durable than that of the daughter.

"Speak to my husband," said Mrs. Desmond, "and if he approves, I can have no objection. I do not ask you to love my child, because I know it is unnecessary; but I ask you, I implore you, never to forget that she has been an only, an idolised child, accustomed to be watched over, shielded, and cherished, and to whom unkindness is unknown."

The affectionate warmth with which Colonel Forrester pressed the mother's hand to his lips, as he avowed that the happiness of her daughter should be his first, his most precious care, carried balm to the heart of Mrs. Desmond, and she felt that in giving her daughter to this excellent young man, she lost not her, but gained a son.

There is no occasion in human life which furnishes a better criterion for judging a family, than that of the marriage of a daughter. The mother who sees her child about to leave the home of her childhood, the happy scene of her infancy, without feeling anxiety and dread, and without endeavoring to attach to her by links of love the new found son on whom the future happiness of her child is to depend, must possess little of the sentiments that a mother ought to have; and the daughter who can leave the home of her happy, careless infancy, the mother who watched over her, and the sisters who shared her pastimes, without a tender regret, and without endeavoring to excite in the breast of her future husband a portion of the affection she feels for those dear relations, must have a character that promises but little for the discharge of the duties she is about to undertake. In such circumstances the husband has no reason to be proud of the cheerfulness with which he is followed to the nuptial home.

Colonel Forrester met with nearly as tender a hearing from the father as had been accorded to him by the mother of his beloved; but Mr. Desmond made his consent conditional on his quitting the army. "A married soldier I never could approve of," said the good old gentleman, "as I am of the old opinion that 'Cupid may wear a red coat, but Hymen never.' Under such circumstances, a man must be a bad husband or a bad soldier; the duties of both are incompatible, and I will not have my son-in-law either. Therefore, my dear young friend, the army must be given up."

If such a proposition had been made to Colonel Forrester before he had known Frances Desmond, he would have felt it as an insult; but, as the condition of being blessed with her hand, he hesitated not a moment in acceding to it; and, accompanied by Mr. Desmond, he sought the boudoir, to announce to Mrs. Desmond the consent of her husband. This time he was not content with simply pressing his lips to the hand of his future mother, but pressed them to the cheek, and a happier group could not be found than the boudoir now contained. Frances was summoned to partake the general joy, and the tears from her eyes that bedewed the cheeks of her parents, had no bitterness in them, as, alternately pressed in their arms, they embraced her again and again. It was decided that Mr. Desmond should not set out for Dublin until next day, and Colonel Forrester wanted but little persuasion to postpone his departure for head-quarters until the same moment.

My readers must imagine all that persons under such circumstances are likely to feel. Those who have been similarly placed, have only to exercise the powers of memory; and those who have yet to experience the position, must endeavor to picture it in their minds. Whether the former or the latter are most likely to draw a just notion of the feelings of the lovers, is not for us to decide; inasmuch as the result will be influenced in proportion as memory or imagination happens to be most powerful in such as depend on the agency of those faculties. For ourselves, we lean to imagination, and, therefore, have formed in our mind's eye, a brilliant tableau of this happy day at Springmount; but, like all days, happy or unhappy, it finished at about the usual hour.

There are some people whom it is difficult to convince of the even tenor of the march of time. These sceptics are the happy and the unhappy. The first believe that he gallops, and the second are convinced that he crawls; and it is only those who are neither exalted nor depressed, that can really judge of his paces. If we gave our opinion on this momentous point, it would furnish a clue to the inquisitive, for guessing to which class we belong; and as we neither wish to excite envy, by being supposed to belong to the happy sceptics, or pity (because we like not pity) by being considered among the unhappy, we will even leave it to others to decide "who time ambles withal, who time trots withal, who time gallops withal, and who he stands still withal;" merely promising that the venders of curls, rouge, and all the list of et cetera, to supply the place of youthful charms, maintain that he never stands still, whatever else he may do.

## CHAPTER XIII.

"Here's a large mouth, indeed,
That spits forth death, and mountains, rocks, and seas;
Talks as familiarly of roaring lions
As maids of thirteen do of puppy.dogs."

"WELL, sure, Grace, there never was so fine a speech as Mr. O'Blarney gave us to day," said Jim Cassidy to his wife, on entering the cottage and dropping his wearied person into a chair; "faith, I wish you'd been there, for it would have melted the heart out of your body, burnt up the marrow in your bones, and set the blood galloping all through your veins. One thing he said, which I'll never forget, 'twas so moving; he said that the French had a way, and a cruel way sure enough it is, to put their live geese before the fire, and keep 'em there, giving 'em salt and water to drink, till the heat swelled up their livers so big that they could no longer contain 'em, and the poor creathures were killed to save their lives; and these same big livers were made into pies, and sent all over France and England to be eaten by the epicures. 'Now,' says Mr. O'Blarney, 'we are served like the poor geese at Perigord (I think he called it). We are put before the fire of bad treatment, and forced to gulp down the salt of hard usage, 'till our hearts become too big for our bodies, and then we are hung, or transported, or imprisoned, to cure our complaints.' Sure, Grace, this was very moving: it dhrew tears from many of the people, though that foolish boy, Bill Mullouny, began to laugh, and said he'd never see a goose without thinking of the Repalers."

Grace, though little disposed to smile at the moment, could not resist yielding to the impulse, and Jim looked at her with a face of seriousness that indicated he thought the smile little short of profanation, so impressed was he with the pathetic imagery in the speech of O'Blarney.

"Sure, Grace, these are no times for laughing," said Jim, "when the whole counthry is up, and determined to have justice. Sure we're carrying every thing before us; all the elections are in our favor, and ther'll be more Irishmen and Catholics, ay, be my soul, and Repalers too, in the Parliament in England, than of our enemies; and as every rale Irishman can make a speech out of nothing, whereas them English are mighty sparing of their words, and come out with 'em ouly as they do with their guineas, when they think they are really wanted, sure we'll bother 'em entirely, and dhrive 'em out of the place; they'll be so tired of hearing all the Repaling members speechifying one after another, in the rich elegant brogue of the poor ould counthry. And then sure, if the English members say a word against us, haven't we plenty of our own friends that will tell 'em they'll talk to 'em in another place? which manes they'll be for offering 'em gunpowder tay, and sugar a led for their breakfasts, which they'll not like to take, for the English are not half so fond of fighting as we are, in a sociable way, and think people can raison without pistols, which, after all, every Irish gentleman knows is the argument that hits oftenest. Then they'll not like to be made cry, when our speechifiers comes over 'em with all the melting mournful descriptions of our slavery; and they'll soon be glad to join all together, and ax the King to let us have a Parliament of our own in Dublin, for sake of peace and quietness, and to get rid of us. What a blessing it is for me to be able to read the newspaper down at the Cat and Bagpipes, and so know all they say in the Parliament! though I must say Mr. O'Blarney, long may he live to reign over us! didn't spake half so elegantly in London as he does in the ould counthry; but I suppose he thought that giving 'em the same fine words he gives us, would be throwing pearls before swine, for they haven't the gumption to understand 'em.

"That man might do anything with us, Grace," continued Jim, "every word he says makes the heart beat quicker; sure, I've heard Tom Jeffreys, that was in Portugal with the cavalry, say, that when they were going into battle, and that many of 'em felt a little quare, the sound of the trumpets roused up their courage, and the very horses became impatient to rush into action, such a power had that music on man and baist. Now, this is the effect that O'Blarney's speeches have on us: we go to hear him, half inclined to go no more, talked over against it by landlords, fathers, mothers, and wives; but before he has spoken half an hour, ay! be my troth ten minutes, it's all over with us: the heart begins to thump against the side, the chest begins to heave up as if it hadn't half room, one gets hot and could fits by turns, that rush up to the very roots of the hair, and landlords, fathers, mothers, and wives, are no more thought of than if they never were in the world. He might lead us to death that very minute; we'd face the mouth of a cannon, and glory in every danger, while his words are tingling in our ears; but when we come home, and see the friends we love unhappy, and a wife like yourself, dear Grace, looking pale and sorrowful, all the grand thoughts he puts into our heads go clean out of 'em; and when we thry to remember them, it's all like a throubled dream, and one feels quite tired and low-spirited, and cross-like, just as I used to feel the morning after I had taken the wicked whisky, out of humor with myself and all the world. Sure, I wish the King of England would make O'Blarney King of Ireland, for then 'twould be his interest to keep us all quiet and dacent, and as he can do what he likes with us, 'twould be as aisy for him to make us orderly as to make us what we are, and the families at home would be satisfied, and we wouldn't be argufying as we all now are always doing, more's the pity.

"Sure, Grace," Jim continued, after a short pause, "the power that a man like O'Blarney can gain over hundreds and thousands of his fellow-creatures, is almost like witchcraft, and the more one thinks of it, the more wonderful it appears. His words stir up thoughts and feelings that were sleeping in the mind, and that are as obedient to his call as are the soldiers called out on the parade as I saw at Dungarvan. And then to think that this power, this mighty power, comes not from wealth, from station, or from any thing but the strength of master thoughts, and big words, which have greater power than flaming swords, and can madden or melt; it's a quare thing, Grace, and we can no more account for it than we can explain why some music, and some perfumes, work our feelings into joy or sadness, bring back pleasant or bitter thoughts, over which we have no control."

"I believe, Jim dear," said Grace, "that it is because we all have in our hearts some feelings that remain quietly there, until they are touched by some one who knows how to play on 'em. Look at the pipes that Kernes Fitzpatrick can make send out the most sweet and doleful tunes, until the hearts of those that hear them are as soft and dismal as themselves, and seem to sigh back an echo to every note; and then hear him play the 'Fox-hunter's Jigg,' the 'Moddhoreen Rhu,' or any of the hundred wild, joyous, frolicsome tunes he gives us; and one forgets every melancholy thought, and is ready to jump out of one's very skin for gladness. If his notes didn't find some notes in our hearts that answered 'em, 'twould be quite another guess thing; and so it is with Mr. O'Blarney—he awakens up the sleeping thoughts, but, och! Jim, he only awakens to intoxicate 'em, and uses the gift of God, big and burning words, to scorch those he plays 'em off on. I don't like to say I detest him, Jim, because it's a hard word to come from a woman's lips; but when I think of the good he might do, and the harm he does, sure I think he's for all the world like a comet, bright and flaming, that all gaze on, but that all dread to come too near."

"Who ever lived, Grace a-vourneen, so mane and chicken-hearted, as not to feel his spirit rise at the fine word 'Liberty,' and his cheek grow red with shame at the word 'Slave?' These are the words with which O'Blarney can madden us, for our hearts understand 'em, though our heads do not; and often's the time that my poor head is all in a cumfluster, when I can't tell what I mane or what I wish, except that I would die for liberty, and kill him who would enslave me. There's two kind of senses—the sense of the head, which is all for money and prudence, and the sense of the heart, which is all for liberty and love. They never are good friends together, and troth, I believe few Irishmen have much share of the first, though they have so much of the second. People say of a man he has a sensible head, but they never say he has a sensible heart."

"And how could they, Jim dear?" said Grace, "seeing as how the heart was sensible, it would not act so as to vex itself, and you must allow that those who follow what they call liberty, generally soon take leave of love. Liberty, according to my notion, Jim, is something so fine, so pure, and holy, that it couldn't burn in a heart without making it better; and all the sins and crimes that are committed in its name, only prove to me that they who commit 'em are guilty of two great crimes, those of falseness, and throwing a bad repute on what ought to be free from stain. I can fancy dying, or slaying in the field of battle, felling, or falling with a thousand wounds, to preserve one's country, one's family, or one's honor; but to commit murders on poor wretches who cannot defend themselves, to burn, and destroy, and say that such base crimes are in the cause of liberty—och! Jim, it's a sin and a shame, and he who rouses you with the name, leaves you to worship a blood-stained shadow, instead of teaching you to adore the purest of all feelings, and one that never can make her dwelling but in noble hearts that turn from cruelty and crime. He leads ye with the name, but leaves ye in ignorance of the substance."

## CHAPTER XIV.

"It is an easy and vulgar thing to please the mob, and not a very arduous thing to astonish them; but essentially to benefit and to improve them, is a work fraught with difficulty, and teeming with danger.

On arriving in Dublin, Mr. Desmond waited on the Secretary, and met the ready attention which his own high character so well deserved. He found Mr. Manly the enlightened and intelligent gentleman he had been led to expect, deeply impressed with the alarming state of the country, and truly anxious to tranquillise it by every means in his power. While doing justice to the statesman-like views of the Secretary, and the unbending honesty with which he pursued the line marked out by duty, though thereby exposing himself to the unjust odium of public clamor—heaped on him by those who could not, or would not, render justice to the purity of his motives, or the firmness and ability with which he resisted intimidation—Mr. Desmond was forced to admit that it was peculiarly unfortunate, that, at such a crisis, the person placed in so arduous a situation united not a more conciliatory *manner* to the various solid and excellent qualities that adorned him.

The coldness and hauteur of Mr. Manly's manner, lent a sternness and severity to observations which, if made in a more good-natured tone, might have had a less repulsive effect on his hearers. *C' est l' air qui fait le chanson*, is an old phrase that one was perpetually reminded of when listening to him, for the *matter* of his observations on Ireland had nothing harsh or unkind; on the contrary, it was dispassionate and full of forbearance; but the *manner* was cold and repulsive.

Mr. Desmond had mixed too much with the world, not to make ample allowance for the *fierté* of a naturally proud and noble mind, at finding itself for the first time opposed to elements so jarring and uncongenial as those which constituted the minds of the greater part of the persons with whom Mr. Manly was brought in contact in Ireland. The habits of strict veracity, so indispensable in the character of a gentleman in England, peculiarly unfit him for looking with a lenient eye on the habitual disregard to truth that candor compels us to own is one of the characteristic and besetting sins of Ireland: hence a constitutional coldness and hauteur on the part of the high-born Secretary, had been increased by his continually witnessing the misrepresentations, wilful or unintentional, of those who approached him; but it soon wore off when he found himself with persons on whose assertions he could place faith.

From the Castle, Mr. Desmond proceeded to the Lodge of the Phœnix Park, the summer residence of the Lord Lieutenant, where he received a most kind and cordial reception from the Viceroy. It would have been difficult, if not impossible, to have found a nobleman in England more calculated to fill with distinction the high situation to which he was appointed in Ireland, than the Marquis of Mona. Brave to a proverb, frank, generous, and unsuspicious, he was the very *beau ideal* of chivalry. To the gallant bearing of a soldier he united the *fierté* of aristocracy, softened down by high breeding and grace of manner, as peculiar as it was captivating. Mr. Desmond had long known and learned to estimate his noble qualities, and, as was the case with all who approached the Viceroy, the frankness of his demeanor, gained on the confidence of the fine old man, who listened with pleased attention to the animated and feeling representations of the Marquis; all of which only served to convince him

more strongly of that which he had never allowed his mind to doubt—the warm and deep interest the Lord Lieutenant entertained for the country he governed.

A greater proof of the wish of the English Government to conciliate Ireland, could hardly be given than in selecting as her Viceroy a nobleman so calculated to charm the sympathies of the people. In this spirit was he received, and wherever he publicly appeared, his presence was hailed with an universal enthusiasm, until defamation propagated a thousand slanders, which every action of his, if properly viewed, must have refuted, but which it was too much for the interest of the propagators to keep alive; so that he who was formed to be the idol of the enthusiastic warm-hearted, and generous nation he was sent to rule, was held up to them as the betrayer of their interests—one whom they were neither to trust nor to love.

When Mr. Desmond was made acquainted with the multiplied and conflicting reports of the state of the country sent up to the Castle, he no longer marvelled at the impossibility of the Irish Government being able to arrive at just conclusions, and, consequently, to apply remedies. The statements sent from his own county alone were so various and contradictory, that on perusing them, he almost doubted the evidence of his senses.

Each reporter viewed, or at least represented, the state of affairs through the medium of his own political feelings and prejudices. An ultra Tory Lord wrote that the country was in open rebellion. Anarchy and confusion reigned around; the Church was in danger: and the Protestant ascendancy was tottering. All this (as was more than insinuated by the wr.ter) proceeded from the impolitic measure of granting the Catholics emancipation, and not compelling the strong body of the people of Ireland to bow to the supremacy of the *weak*. The Irish Government were reproached indirectly with their ill-judged lenity, and an air of triumphant self-complacency at the shrewdness and superior judgment of the writer, pervaded what was meant to be a true and impartial statement of evils, the source of which he was more anxious to attribute to the Government than to remedy. Party feeling, narrow prejudices, and illiberal sentiments, marked every line of the Orange Lord's sapient epistle; all that he reported seemed tinged with the atrabilarious hue of his own politics; and Mr. Desmond finished its perusal with disgust, to look over the report of a *liberal* county member.

Here again disappointment awaited him. Instead of a simple statement of *facts*, he found a recapitulation of *motives*, all colored with the glowing tints of the writer's imagination, and evidently painted with a view to produce a scenic effect at some future election. The *tyranny* of Protestants who, forsooth, had the audacity to protect their rights and properties, was dwelt on with unmitigated censure; and Mr. Desmond, on perusing the inflated detail, seriously wished that an attentive study of "Crabbe's Synonymes" might be recommended to the Irish gentlemen to be laid on their tables, with "Burn's Justice's Guide," as some restraint on their powers of hyperbole.

The statement of the liberal was laid by, with opinions similar to those which had been excited by the perusal of the ultra Tory's report; and Mr. Desmond felt a sentiment of increased admiration mingle with the respect due to those distinguished members of the English aristocracy, who could consent to leave their happy and civilised country, their tranquil homes, and agreeable habits of life and society, to accept the office of viceroy in a semi-barbarous kingdom, torn by factions, where the wisdom of the serpent, the courage of the lion, and the peacefulness of the dove, would be powerless when opposed to people determined to ruin their country for the mere gratification of wreaking a mutual and individual vengeance.

Mr. Desmond failed not to impress on the Lord Lieutenant's mind, that the statements he had read were founded in error, and that the mass of the people were but as tools in the hands of those who wielded them for their own selfish and interested purposes. "Deprive such hands of power, my Lord," said he, "and their weapons become useless; but if, as hitherto, the people are punished for the crimes of those who lead them into danger, and then evade responsibility, little progress is made in staying the evil that has been undermining Ireland for years. As well might the combustible materials that spread conflagration be considered the *cause* of the flames, instead of the incendiary who applied the torch to them, as the misguided, impetuous, warm-hearted peasantry be condemned for the excesses to which they have been led by the artful and designing men who make a merchandise of the very qualities that are but the exuberance of a too rich

soil, and traffic with the excited passions of those ductile people. The more I love my country, my Lord, and pity its deluded peasantry, the more I loathe those who lead them like victims to the sacrifice."

## CHAPTER XV.

"If those alone who 'sowed the wind did reap the whirlwind,' it would be well. But the mischief is, that the blindness of bigotry, the madness of ambition, and the miscalculations of diplomacy, seek their victims principally amongst the innocent and the unoffending. The cottage is sure to suffer for every error of the court, the cabinet, or the camp."

Mr. Desmond found the Lord Lieutenant and Secretary so disposed to try every effort of conciliation before they called in the strong arm of power, that he thought it his duty to impress on them the utter hopelessness of such measures.

"The country is now, my lord, in that state," said he, "that the people must be taught to *fear* the laws before they can respect them; and, unhappily, conciliation in the present moment would be more likely to be viewed as a proof of the *weakness* than of the *kindness* of the Government. There is no protection for person or for property. Who can count for twenty-four hours on a people whom an inflated speech from an agitator may send forth to use physically the firebrands he has been morally scattering abroad? Is it to be borne with, that any man is to be allowed the volcanic power of rocking a whole kingdom to its centre, whenever he chooses to send forth his mandates? No, my lord; were an individual to be found who could use such power wisely and moderately, never wielding it but for the benefit of his countrymen, even then, it would be dangerous and unwise to permit his retention of it. Such precedents are full of danger; they offer an opportunity to every political adventurer to elevate himself on the ruins of his country. Tranquilise Ireland, what becomes of its agitators! They know that they must sink into comparative insignificance; and rather would they make a funeral pile of the kingdom, and consume themselves on it, than willingly abandon "the fearful and dizzy height" to which they have elevated themselves at the expense of their country. The people are proud of the Colossus they have reared; they admire their own strength, as displayed in supporting this proof of its unhealthy exuberance, but the moment that strength is directed to useful and profitable purposes, they will see their past delusion, and abandon their errors."

Mr. Desmond was invited to dine at the Phœnix Park, and while partaking the hospitality of the Viceroy, was pleased to see assembled round his splendid board all the rank and talent that Dublin could boast. The polished urbanity of the noble host, the amiable politeness of his high-born and high-bred wife, and the interesting group of young people around them, whose attentions to their father's guests were as delicate as they were judicious, were highly gratifying to a mind like Mr. Desmond's, who felt that all he saw was indicative of the cordial good will, and spirit of conciliation, which had marked the conduct of the gallant and generous Viceroy from the moment of his touching Irish ground; and he mentally execrated the pernicious counsels that would pervert the people, or induce them to wish to dissolve the bond of union that linked them to a country which could send such examples of all that was most excellent amongst them.

Before leaving the Lodge, Mr. Desmond could not refrain from expressing the pleasure he should feel, if the Marquess and Marchioness of Mona made a tour through the South of Ireland, and honored Springmount with their presence.

While acknowledging the hospitality and politeness of the invitation, the gallant Marquess declined it, and Mr. Desmond felt that delicacy and tact dictated the refusal. Had the Viceroy undertaken a tour, it must have been made with something of "the pomp and circumstance" of regal splendor. All the great houses passed by without a visit, even though a visit was unsought, would become focuses of discontent, around which the satellites of each would rally; and to prevent this, the Lord Lieutenant declined many an invitation where his presence could not have failed to excite affection and good-will.

Unhappy is the country whose ruler is forced to such self-denial, and unhappy the people who are deprived of ocular demonstration of the qualities of him to whom their destinies are confided, and whom they only know through the medium of misrepresentation!

Mr. Desmond left Dublin next day, being most anxious to join his family, and feeling that the present was not a time to leave them to the tender mercies of the misguided peasantry in the country. He travelled rapidly, and observed with in-

quietude the groups of idle gloomy-looking persons that were loitering around the inns in all the towns where he changed horses, and who examined him with curious eyes, as if they expected some exciting intelligence.

On drawing nearer home, he was surprised to find that he was no longer welcomed by the animated salutations, and reiterated professions of affection, with which the people had been wont to receive him. His carriage being recognised, a respectful, but cold uncovering of the head, was the only notice given to him.

"Poor unhappy people!" thought Mr. Desmond, "it is thus you always repay those who are your best, your truest friends. When will you learn to distinguish between the egotistical political speculators who use you as their tools, and those who would honestly and honorably serve you? You murdered a Mountjoy, a kind, a noble, and true friend; and you insulted and would have destroyed a Grattan, whose genius, whose patriotism, threw a halo over his country."

The recollection of the two persons whose memories he had invoked, brought sadness to the heart of Mr. Desmond. The Lord Mountjoy had been the friend of his early youth, and was the model on which he had formed himself. The chivalrous sense of honor, the love of literature and of the fine arts, and above all, the devotion to his country, which distinguished that amiable and beloved nobleman, had endeared him to all who knew him; but by Mr. Dresmond—who had been the companion of his travels in Italy, and who, though many years his junior, had learned to appreciate his noble qualities—he had ever been revered as a bright example of virtue, whose tragic death, met at the hands of those whose interests his life had been spent in upholding, was never remembered but with sorrow and with bitterness. Grattan, great, good, and glorious Grattan, whose genius was only equalled by his honesty, and whose long and honorable life was passed in advocating the cause of freedom, but who, while worshipping the pure flame of liberty, turned with honest disgust from the destroying fire of license.

"And can it be," thought Mr. Desmond, "that this fickle, this ungrateful people, can forget the pure idol they worshipped, to set up in its stead the man of law, who can calculate how far democracy can safely go, and where ends the line of demarcation between agitation and treason?"

Such thoughts were indeed bitter. Mr. Desmond dwelt on the hopes of his youth, when he had looked forward to seeing his country emerge from the dark cloud that overshadowed it, and, emulating England, make rapid strides to civilisation. How had those hopes been frustrated!—Whig and tory governments had alternately applied themselves to redressing the evils under which she groaned for centuries, but had applied themselves in vain; and now, after yielding emancipation, which had been considered as the panacea that was to heal every disease, and all parties concluded that tranquillity would be established, a new *ignis fatuus* sprang up to mislead this reckless people, and conduct them to the very verge of utter ruin. Thus, in his declining life, Mr. Desmond endured that bitter infliction for a patriotic spirit;—the misery of witnessing the civilisation and happiness of his unfortunate country retrograding much more rapidly than he had ever seen them advance.

## CHAPTER XVI.

"Adieu for him
The dull engagements of the bustling world!
Adieu the sick impertinence of praise,
And hope, and action! for with her alone,
By streams and shades to steal these sighing hours
Is all he asks, and all that fate can give!"

When Colonel Forrester returned to Waterford, he found that the few days which had elapsed during his absence, had been marked by fresh riots, tumultuous meetings, and resistance to the laws. On sending his resignation to the War Office, he regretted the being obliged to withdraw his services at a crisis which threatened to require them. But his promise was pledged, and he felt that under the circumstances of his present engagement, his first duty was to attend to the happiness of his future wife and that of her parents, which happiness, he was decidedly of opinion, could only be secured by their fixing their residence in England.

His brother officers heard that they were to lose Colonel Forrester with deep regret, for he was as universally as he was deservedly beloved and respected in his regiment. The few days that must pass ere he could receive the acceptance of his resignation, he determined to remain at head-quarters; but he daily despatched a servant with letters to Springmount, and thence, in return, received tidings fraught with affection.

An authority, whom to doubt would be profanation, has said that "the course of true love never did run smooth;" and, according to all received usage, we have committed an unusual solecism in allowing our hero and heroine to meet, love, and become affianced lovers, without any of the usual obstacles that intervene on such occasions. Yet, they loved not the less ardently because no such obstacles had occurred; and had the father of the heroine been a domestic tyrant, who refused to listen to the pleadings of affection, and forbade the lover the sight of his daughter, they could not be more anxious or impatient to meet again.

"What!" exclaims one of my female readers, "when there was neither risk nor difficulty in the meeting? no mother to be deceived, and no father to be outwitted?"

It is even so, kind and gentle reader; but then, remember, that Francis Desmond resembled in nought, save in beauty, a heroine of romance, according to the received notions of such a personage; and that her lover as little resembled a hero, except in being handsome, brave, and in love. Nay we must add, that the certainty that Colonel Forrester's presence would be hailed with delight by her parents, increased the pleasure and impatience with which Frances looked forward to his arrival; and after this confession, she must forfeit all claims to the distinction of a heroine.

The attachment between Frances and her parents seemed to have become more tender since she had been affianced to Colonel Forrester. It was as though she was desirous of proving to them that the new sentiment she experienced, a sentiment considered to supersede and engross all others, had not diminished her affection for them, while they felt all the bonds of love drawn still more closely, as they contemplated the possibility of a separation from their child.

They had always wished to make her residence with them a condition of her marriage; but delicacy, and a fear of being thought to dictate to a son-in-law whose inferior fortune rendered the marriage in some degree unequal, restrained them from expressing their wishes, and Frances having never for a moment contemplated the possibility of leaving her father and mother, the subject was un-named, though it occupied all the thoughts of the doting parents, and filled their eyes with tears whenever they dwelt on their child, and thought of her being taken from them.

This was the only alloy to their happiness, the only drop of bitterness in their cup. But so it is ever, even with the happiest—some care or fear will always arise to throw a cloud over what otherwise might be too bright for our imperfect natures.

To a practical knowledge of the world, that is in no school more readily acquired than in the army, Colonel Forrester united an affectionate disposition, and deep tenderness of nature, which that school too often tends to blunt. Left an orphan at an early age, the sole protector of a lovely young sister, he had assiduously supplied the place of the parents they had lost, until he had the happiness of bestowing her hand, where she had already given her heart, on a young nobleman of amiable disposition, cultivated mind, and large fortune. His attachment to his sister had prepared his heart for the passionate one that now engrossed it, and fond anticipations of the friendship he hoped to cement between his future wife and that dear sister, were mingled in all his aspirations of the future.

"Frances is precisely the person formed to be chosen as the friend of my dear sister," said Colonel Forrester often to himself; "and Louisa is sure to be loved, as soon as she is known."

Every man who has a favorite sister, and is in love, has entertained a similar thought; but how few have realised the agreeable visions they have indulged! Sisters-in-law are apt to view each other, not through the flattering optics of the husband and brother, but through the microscopic ones of female rivalry; and, being thrown more frequently into close contact with each other than with other female friends, defects are discovered that might have escaped detection in less near connections. A sister has been accustomed to be the first person in a brother's estimation, and even a good one will feel something more of the woman than of the sister rising in her breast, when she is told by her brother, what brothers are too apt to tell, that her new relative is "the loveliest, wisest, virtuousest, best," of all her sex, without the enraptured panegyrist having the fraternal grace to make even one solitary exception for the hitherto idolised sister.

Colonel Forrester, however, knew his sister well; and therefore could without

danger of disappointment, reckon on the affection which an acquaintance between her and his future wife could not fail to produce; and in this conviction, felt the strongest impatience to make them mutually known.

In writing to acquaint Lady Oriel of his approaching marriage, he gave so graphic a portrait of his betrothed, that she learned to love, even without having seen, her future sister, and knowing the acute judgment of her brother, which not even love could have blinded, she felt persuaded that the picture was not too flattering.

In his letters to Lady Oriel he poured forth his whole soul, as she had often done to him, when dwelling on her wedded happiness, and he wrote,

"To love thou blam'st me not, for love thou sayest
Leads up to heaven, is both the way and guide."

Family affections are our consolations for the coldness and indifference of the world; and the tie that unites a brother and sister, formed in infancy and strengthened in youth, becomes indissoluble in maturity. No friendship formed in after-age can have the same charm. This is identified with our happiest days, has grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength, until it has become a part of our very being.

"Like twining streams both from one fountain fell,
And as they ran still mingled smiles and tears."

The difference of sex, in this relation, adds to the strength of the affection. As fathers love their daughters better than sons, and mothers love their sons better than daughters, so do sisters feel towards brothers a more constant sentiment of attachment than towards each other. None of the little vanities, heart-burnings and jealousies, that, alas for poor human nature! are but too apt to spring up in female hearts, can arise between brother and sister; each is proud of the success of the other, because it cannot interfere with self—nay, on the contrary, is flattering to self. Hence, if there be a bond of family union more free from all the selfish blots that interrupt all others, it is that which exists between an affectionate sister and brother.

Colonel Forrester almost doubted the reality of the happiness prepared for him. It seemed too great, too perfect, to last. The letters of Frances breathed affection pure and spotless as herself; her dear father and mother were continually referred to in them as being as impatient as herself for his return, and sentiments of pious gratitude mingled in every expression of chastened, maidenly tenderness, that escaped from her pen.

"I shall love Springmount more than ever, now that I know you, dearest, are to pass your life here with me," wrote Frances Desmond. "My father and mother are planning a thousand improvements and embellishments, to be carried on under your inspection. You are uppermost in every project for the future, and occupy us all so continually, that our love for you seems a new bond of union between us, and we wonder how we were happy before we knew you. But no, we were not happy, we were only content, and a few weeks have proved to us how vast is the distance between happiness and content. How delightful it is to hear my father and mother always talking of you! but you have no one to speak to you of your Frances."

## CHAPTER XVII.

"Nous qui sommes bornées en tout, comment le sommes nous si peu quand il s'agit souffrir."

Grace Cassidy was sitting by the expiring embers of her fire on a Sunday night, filled with melancholy reflections, called up by recollections of the past and dread of the future, excited by her weak-minded husband's perseverance in following the dictates of the agitators, when Larry M'Swigger entered her cottage.

"I'm just come to ax you if you can let me have a bed this blessed night, Mistress Cassidy?" said Larry. "Indeed and troth I wouldn't be for throubling you, but that the Cat and Bagpipes, where I had engaged a bed, is no fit place for a quiet man, such goings on! such rhaumish and disputing! such knocking the tables with fists! such flourishing of shillelahs, singing, crying, and cursing!—that I wouldn't stay there, and stole away to come and ax you to let me have a place to lie down."

Grace consented to arrange a bed for Larry, because she felt that she could not, without an appearance of inhospitality unknown amongst the Irish of her class, refuse him; but the duties of hospitality were never so unwillingly performed by her as at this moment, as Larry would now be made a witness of her husband's late hours, for which she could offer no excuse; and with the sensitiveness of womanly love she shrank from having his errors exposed.

"Sure, these are quare times, Mistress Cassidy," said Larry, "to see the grand gentlemen of the country hardly so much as mentioned, and all the tag, rag, and bobtail, set up as laiders. Faith, it reminds me of a pot of broth, where all the scum floats up to the top; and be my soul, Mistress Cassidy, like the broth, the scum must be taken off, before it's fit for using. Well, there was Jack Donovan came into the Cat and Bagpipes with his arm broke, and one of his legs dislocated, in a fight with one of the policemen, whom he left stretched for dead on the road; and when he came into the tap-room and showed how kilt he was, didn't your husband, Jim Cassidy, slap him on the back, and say he was gloriously maimed and illustriously mutilated? upon which all of 'em began screeching and shouting out for Jim and for Jack Donovan. Faith, myself slipped off and came here, to be out of harm's way: for if the police goes to take up Jack Donovan, there'll be bad work at the Cat and Bagpipes, for all the boys are determined to stand by him.

"They had a newspaper there, and were reading all the speeches of the Irish mimbers. Faith, I couldn't make head or tail of 'em, there was such nard words; only one thing I minded, which was that when any of the Repalers made a speech, the English mimbers began to laugh, which was not mannerly; though for the matter of that, maybe they couldn't help it, for sure it's hard not to laugh at a joke, and many's the joke our mimbers will pass on 'em before they've done with 'em.

"Well, then, when they laughed, one of the Repalers up and tould 'em plain enough—'Gentlemen,' says he, 'ye may laugh, but the laugh will be echoed by many a weep and wail from Ireland.' Faith, this reminded me of the echo, that when you cried out, 'How do you do?' answered, 'Very well thank you.' Well, Mistress Cassidy, sure we ought to be thankful for such mild weather here any way, when one sees in the newspapers that the mimbers couldn't be heard for coughing in the parliament. Faith, I never heard the English were so subject to coulds till lately."

Poor Grace had scarcely heard the observation of Larry M'Swigger, from the moment that he told her of her husband's ill-judged compliments to Jack Donovan. At one instant she was tempted to go to the Cat and Bagpipes in search of him, but the next she felt ashamed to present herself before such an assemblage of riotous and intoxicated men; she feared also that Jim might be offended at her going, and resent it before his companions.

She repeatedly got up and went to the door, to see, if her husband was approaching, but he did not appear; and she stood leaning on the door-post, dreading to enter the kitchen again, where Larry would be sure to assail her with a never-ending history, to which the present state of her nerves rendered her little disposed to listen.

It was a clear, moonlight night, and every object was silvered over by the bright luminary. The stillness that reigned around contrasted fearfully with the disturbed feelings of Grace; and she turned from a view that had often delighted her, because its very calm was at the present moment a mockery to the agitation and fear that filled her breast.

How often had she stood with Jim on the same spot on such a night, both of them charmed with all that now lay spread before her, and wondering if the moon was equally brilliant in other places! And well did she remember Jim's saying, "Sure if it' s equally bright in other places where could it find such a clear, beautiful looking-glass, to see its fair face in, as in our own broad river? or such fine mountains to pass over, and such woods to be shining on, as here? And sure, Grace asthore, every fair face likes to see itself. Didn't I catch your own dear self looking on the can of water one day when you first wore the pink ribbon I brought you from the fair of Carrick?"

What woman forgets a compliment from the man she loves? The simple one of Jim, recalled to her recollection by the beautiful scene around, brought before her the fatal change in him.

"Ah! he loved me then," thought Grace, "and saw beauty in my face! Little he thinks of it now, for tears have withered it, and smiles are strangers to my mouth, that used to be so full of 'em. There is that same bright and beautiful moon, shining on the same mountains, rivers, and trees—every thing is just the same as when I was so happy. Sure I think I'd bear the change in him better, if all around me was changed too. Bur no, that beautiful moon will shine just as brightly when I'm in my grave and all my throubles are over: and every thing will look just the same, though my eyes, that used to be so fond of looking on them, will see them no more. Well, I hope I may be buried by the side of Jim, in the sunny

corner of the churchyard, for I'd like to have the sun shining on our graves, and the beautiful moon looking down on 'em even though we could'nt see 'em."

The thought of death calmed the feelings of Grace. She entered, and found Larry M'Swigger asleep, with his head resting on the table. She retired to her room, and on her knees offered up her prayers to the throne of mercy, that her husband might be pardoned and protected, and that grace might be accorded her to turn him from the evil course he was pursuing. She arose from her supplications calm and reassured, and reclined in a chair to wait the return of her husband.

There is a sublimity in prayer that elevates even the most ordinary minds; for who ever lifted up his soul to the Divinity, without feeling emotions to which language is inadequate to give expression? The lips may breathe prayers, though they only faintly convey what is felt; but the heart sends forth aspirations more fervent than speech ever framed. It is at such moments that all which is pure and fine in our natures is most developed. Nought is so purifying as prayer; for evil passions must be at rest, ere the soul can raise itself up to the contemplation of the Almighty, and we must have pardoned ere we can pray for pardon.

Jim returned not to his home until the morning had dawned. His flushed cheek and blood-shot eyes betrayed that, though he had abstained from intoxicating draughts in compliance with his oath, he had not refrained from the equally pernicious intoxication of agitation.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

"Through the shadowy past,
Like a tomb-searcher, memory ran,
Lifting each shroud that time had cast
O er buried hopes."

Grace dared not trust herself with a remonstrance to Jim, until sleep had calmed the feverish excitement under which he evidently labored. Hitherto, no word of anger or bitterness had passed between them, because Grace had forborne to urge his impatient temper; and she dreaded to expose herself to some ebullition of anger, in which recrimination might break down the barriers of forbearance, that still supplied the place of love on the part of her husband. While he dropped into the heavy slumber that follows powerful excitement, she saw the morning sun break into the chamber.

"This," thought she, "used to be his usual hour of going to his work. How have I stood at the door to look after him, as his feet brushed the dew from the grass, and the birds were singing from every branch! I thought how many hours must pass before he returned to me again, and I was sorrowful; but when he got to the last bend of the field, and turned round to see if I was looking at him, and waved his hat to me so cheerfully, my spirits came back, and I used to think of preparing for his return something nice for his supper. When I rubbed all the furniture, and made it shine so bright, and stuck fresh holly on the dresser, among the pewter plates that shone like silver, and looked round and saw every thing so nate and tidy that a king might sit down in the kitchen; I used to be so proud and happy, thinking how he would enjoy it all when he came home —and he used to enjoy it, and praise everything I did; and call me his own dear good Grace, but now—"

Her eyes fell on the contracted brow of the sleeper—his flushed cheek, and clenched teeth bore evidence that, though the body reposed, the mind was still active; and "slaves and tyrants" were indistinctly murmured from his lips, as with a menacing gesture of the hand he muttered the words that had taken such a hold of his heated imagination. Bitter feelings arose in the breast of poor Grace, and she thanked God that she had still charity enough left, not to curse the wily agitators who had led her once excellent husband to this altered state, and blighted all her happiness.

"It's no use thinking and fretting," said Grace; "here is another day lost from his work; sure, I must try and make up for it, by doing as much as I can."

And with this wise resolution, a resolution we would recommend to every wife in similar circumstances, she made her simple but neat toilette, cleaned her house, and performed all her domestic duties before Larry M'Swigger had risen from the comfortable bed which she had assigned to him.

"Why then, faith, Mistress Cassidy, it's yourself that's the stirring active woman any way, to be up so early after being up so late, as a body might say. Sure, you're just as nate and tidy as if you were in your bed from nine till six, instead of, as I suspect, not having slept at all; for I heard you sighing whenever I woke in

the night, which I did mighty often, bekase the bed was so elegant that I, who haven't been used to such a one for a long while, found that it disturbed me; besides which, I couldn't sleep for dreaming. Faith, I dreamt enough to fill a book, and such quare things! I hope they won't come thrue, though I'm afeared they will, for I dreamt 'em chiefly towards the morning, and the morning dreams mostly comes thrue—worse luck for me this time if they do. I used to hate getting up early when I was young; faith, for the matther of that, I don't much like it now; but I always remimbered that if I stayed sleeping in my bed in the morning, and had bad dreams, they'd come thrue; so that made me jump up; and I'm tould by those that know all about it, that the dreams of the night never comes to pass—I suppose it's chiefly bekase people can't remember 'em so well."

Grace, "on hospitable thoughts intent," spread a clean white cloth on the deal table, placed a large loaf of home-baked brown bread on it, with a plate of nicely scooped crock-butter, and two piggins of skimmed milk; and invited Larry M'Swigger with a hearty welcome to partake her humble repast: an invitation which he thankfully accepted, observing, "that a good hand she was, to give a decent comfortable *brekus*, (Irish for breakfast,) with lashings of every thing; and her mother, rest her soul! was the same before her."

They had only finished their repast, when Peggy Halloran, a neighbor, came in; and, big with news which she was most anxious to communicate, began, after the usual morning salutations of—"God save ye this fine morning!" with "Have ye heard the news?"

Being answered in the negative, she continued—"Well, then, it's great news, surprising news, and terrible news for some people I'm thinking;" stealing a look at the blanched cheek of Grace, who latterly had associated news and trouble to Jim, together in her mind. "Well, sure there was one of them police kilt last night by one of the boys, and sure enough he's dead downright, and they've sint to the justices, and sint off for the soldiers, and every mother's soul in Cologan that was out of their houses last night, will be taken up and hung for the murdher. Sure, what's the matter with you, Mistress Cassidy? you look as pale as death; I hope none of your friends had a hand in this job. My honest man never stirred out of the house last night;—faith, I took care he should'nt; for I put a jar of potheen that I got from the mountains before him, and says I, "There's better whisky than ever you'll get at the Cat and Bagpipes, where they'd make you pay double the money for it; so smoke your pipe, and take your dhrop decently at home.' He was mighty unwilling at first to stay, but whin once he began to taste the dhrop, he hadn't the heart to lave it, and never quitted it till he fell off the chair; and the childer and I pulled him to the bed, and he awoke as fresh as a daisy this morning, only a little bothered in the head; and glad enough he is that he wasn't at the Cat and Bagpipes, where he surely would have been, only I had the dhrop at home for him."

Grace sat stupified, listening to this harangue, and Peggy Halloran continued—"I hope you'll excuse my freedom, Mistress Cassidy, but I think it's a great pity you made Jim swear against the dhrop; sure, all the neighbors say, he never was the same man since. Had you let him alone, and always kept a jar of potheen in the house, he'd have stayed quietly with you, and been dhrunk in an hour, and then you'd have had a quiet night's rest, and an aisy mind, instead of having him out all night with them boys. And sure the worst of it is, that now as he's known not to take the dhrop, he'll come off worse bekase people can't say he stayed out all night for the dhrink, or that he was in liquor when he did this, that, or t'other, for the liquor is always an excuse for every thing."

The comment on the interpretation that would be put on Jim's sobriety, struck Grace with terror. "What indeed," she thought, "could be said for his staying out all night, when it was proved he did not drink? And I it was that kept him from drink, and have only saved him from the evils of intoxication, to see him fall into greater, more appalling danger!"

To reason with Peggy Halloran on their different views of the duty of a wife, Grace felt would be as useless, as it would be fatiguing to her present exhausted frame and spirits. She knew that Peggy only spoke the sentiments of the generality of her female neighbors, who, looking on intoxication as a habit as necessary and natural to their husbands as their pipes and tobacco, only calculated on the means of procuring them this indulgence at the least possible expense. What a state of morals! and these dissolute beings are the supporters of the Repealers!

Larry M'Swigger marked the paleness of Grace's cheek; he knew the sleepless

night she had passed, and he felt irritated against Peggy Halloran for the unfeeling personality of her remarks. "Sure, Mistress Halloran, if Jim Cassidy has been out," said Larry, "wasn't it to give good advice, and, being the only sober man amongst them dhrunken boys, to keep 'em out of harm's way? He had no more to say to killing the policeman than I had, of which I can make my Bible oath any way, and prove a yellow boy (an alibi) for him, so never be unaisy, Mistress Cassidy my jewel, for you'll see there'll be no danger in life."

He gave a triumphant look at Peggy Halloran, who felt its force, for she replied that, "Sure, she'd be sorry enough that Jim Cassidy got into trouble, though she must say he never was the same man since he left off the dhrink."

Several other of her neighbors having come in, announced to Grace, that the police were in search of Jack Donovan, who had fled, and that the man he wounded in the scuffle, the night before, was dead. They added the consolatory intelligence, that as Jack Donovan had confessed the crime in the presence of so many witnesses at the Cat and Bagpipes, no one else can be suspected of it; but that most probably, all the persons present at his acknowledgment of the murder, would be summoned to give evidence of his words.

This was a great relief to Grace's fears, though she still looked forward with dread to the effect a summons might produce on the excited feelings of Jim, whose imprudence made her apprehensive that, on his examination, he might compromise his own safety, by giving utterance to the seditious language he had lately adopted from the Repealers.

She awoke him and communicated the death of the policeman, and its possible results, expecting that some sentiment of pity or regret might escape his lips, which would have given her an opportunity of impressing on his mind the fatal consequences likely to ensue from the conflicts between the peasantry and police, which his inflated language was calculated to encourage; and, as hitherto Jim had been as remarkable for humanity as for high courage, two qualities that ought to be inseparable, she fully expected that he would feel shocked at the murder of the unfortunate man, who,

"Unhouseld, disappointed, unaneal'd,
No reckoning made, was sent to his account
With all his imperfections on his head:"

but no, Jim's first expression was, "So perish all our enemies! Jack Donovan has set a grand example by killing the first."

"Oh! hold your tongue, Jim, for mercy's sake!" said Grace, "for my sake! Do you want to be taken up? to be dragged to a prison?—Jim, Jim, you'll break my heart."

"Grace, you are not fit to be the wife of a Pathriot or a Repaler," said Jim. "Sure what's a few lives, in comparison with getting our Parliament back? which we'll be sure to do, if we do all the mischief we can."

To reason with him at this moment, Grace felt, would be useless. She therefore merely urged him to put on his clothes, and go to his work as usual, as his absence from his ordinary occupation might create suspicions to his disadvantage. She had some difficulty in persuading the weak and wilful man even to this prudent measure, and he only yielded to her tears.

When he was gone, Grace determined on proceeding to Springmount, to entreat the protection of the dear good master, in case any misfortune should happen to Jim. She found admittance to the beloved mistress and Miss Desmond, and told them the extent of her fears. They entered into her situation with kind interest, and promised to say all that could be said to Mr. Desmond, to palliate the infatuation of Jim.

"Och! dear ladies," said Grace, "my poor unfortunate husband is bewitched; he sees nothing as it really is, and is no longer in his right mind. Beg of the masther to have pity on him, and not to let his own foolish words ruin him, for he is so lost to common sense, that he has no enemy who would say as ill of him as he says of himself since this terrible delusion has come over him."

Mrs. Desmond and the amiable Frances sincerely pitied Grace, and dismissed her with promises of continued protection to her misguided husband, in spite of his folly and infatuation.

On returning to her home, Grace met various bodies of the police on the road, and shrank from encountering them, as if she felt they must be her enemies from the opposition her husband was disposed to show them.

"A short time ago," thought she, "and the sight of these men would have given me confidence, instead of fear. I should have looked on them as the protectors of my husband and self; and so they would have been, had he continued to deserve it.

But now he is their enemy, and they must be his, and, oh! woe is me, where will all this end?"

## CHAPTER XIX.

"Oh! who art thou who dar'st of love complain?
He is a gentle spirit and injures none!
His foes are ours; from them the bitter pain,
The keen, deep anguish, the heart-rending groan,
Which in his milder reign are never known.
His tears are softer than the April showers;
White handed innocence supports his throne;
His sighs are sweet as breath of earliest flowers,
Affection guides his steps, and peace protects his bowers."

The letter from the War Office, accepting Colonel Forrester's resignation, had no sooner arrived at Waterford, than he set out for Springmount, where his presence was hailed with joy. Mr. Desmond had only returned from Dublin a few days before; and the communications which the two friends had to make to each other on the state of the country, led both to the conclusion, that though it would be much more agreeable to leave Ireland, and fix their residence in England, yet, as their presence and influence in the country might have some weight in subduing the spirit of insubordination which was so prevalent, they ought to sacrifice pleasure to duty, and they agreed that they would remain at Springmount for the present.

Mr. Desmond told Forrester that now his military ties were sundered, the sooner he submitted to his conjugal ones the better, and that he had given his lawyer instruction to put all *en regele*.—"I have but my child and her happiness to consider," said the affectionate father: "all that I possess is to be hers some future day; but, *en attendant*, it is necessary for the happiness of us all, that you and Frances should feel yourselves perfectly independent. Therefore half my fortune shall forthwith become yours, and you will not, I am sure, be impatient for the possession of the other half."

Colonel Forrester felt that this was the moment to open his mind to his future father-in-law; and he told him that, knowing the love Frances felt for her parents, he hoped they could not suspect him of wishing to deprive either them or their child of the happiness of passing their lives together.

"You have overlooked," continued he, "the disparity of fortune between your daughter and myself. Can I do less than declare to you that I will never separate her from you? All future arrangements I leave entirely in your hands. Where you wish to live, there also will I live. In short, I trust, that if you have not obtained a wealthy son-in-law, you have at least found a grateful and attached one, who, having lost his own parents, will most gladly transfer the affection and duty he owed them, to you and Mrs. Desmond."

This frank and affectionate avowal removed the only chagrin the excellent couple had felt at the thoughts of the marriage of their daughter; and all within the walls of Springmount was gaiety and happiness.

"How I long to make you acquainted with my dear sister!" said Colonel Forrester to Frances. "You are formed for each other. Lady Oriel is so unsophisticated, so loving, and so loveable, that it is impossible to know her without being attached to her; and yet, though you are her junior, you are more *posé*, more wise, than she is; for she has a morbid susceptibility, or sensibility, call it which you will, which has been fostered by a similar tendency in the feelings of her otherwise faultless husband, that has sometimes alarmed me for her happiness."

"Surely," said Frances, "this similarity in their feelings must be conducive to their happiness, as it must produce a better understanding, and preclude the possibility of disagreement."

"I am not prepared to admit this reasoning," replied Colonel Forrester. "Though I maintain that a similarity of *tastes* is highly conducive to happiness, a too great assimilation of feelings is apt to mar it. Lord Oriel is too sensitive to speak his wishes, and thinks his wife ought to have an intuitive knowledge of them. Her extreme susceptibility enables her at a glance to perceive when any thing has gone wrong, though she cannot always divine precisely its nature. Each is afraid of wounding the other; hence, one half their lives passes in refined and delicate misunderstandings, and the other half in concealments, or *éclaircissements* of them. Less morbid feelings would avoid the first, and not be compelled to the other two. I see, dearest, that you smile, because, luckily you have never been exposed to a contact with persons like Lord Oriel, who have a thousand virtues and only one fault. You have lived with those who have all the former without the latter, and I must take care that through me you extend not your knowledge on this point, and not let so much happiness render me too fastidious. You, dear

Frances! must keep me in order, otherwise I shall be spoiled."

The smile of affection with which the lovely girl extended her hand to her lover, gave little assurance of her compliance with his request of keeping him in order; and her gentleness afforded evidence that he would be compelled to hold the reins of domestic government, as she was formed to obey more than to dictate.

Every thing being now in progress for the marriage of Colonel Forrester and Miss Desmond, it became the general topic of conversation in the neighborhood. The observations it excited, showed how strongly party feelings and prejudices influenced the opinions of all classes on the subject. The gentry expressed their surprise that Mr. Desmond should be compelled to give his heiress to a stranger—an Englishman—and of comparatively small fortune, when he might have chosen a more suitable husband for her in his own country. They dwelt on the annoyance of seeing so fine an estate pass into the hands of an utter stranger, and each had some hypercritical observation to make on the Colonel's reserved air, distant manner, and too dignified demeanor. In short, they were determined to find fault, and when this determination exists, it is not difficult to furnish it with food.

Among the lower classes, the intended alliance excited still stronger disapprobation; and as in no country do the lower orders claim or usurp to themselves a greater right of questioning the conduct and motives of their superiors, so in no country are they less capable of understanding either. The tap-room of the Cat and Bagpipes became the arena where these wordy plebeian gladiators were to attack the right of their excellent landlord to grant the hand of his daughter to him whom he considered the most worthy to possess it.

"Here's a purty business," said Will Gavin, the smith; "the ould fool of a masther giving his daughter, and, what's worse, the green acres, to the Sassenach! Sure, 'tis enough to provoke a saint, if there was any saints; but they left the counthry when Castlereagh, bad luck to him! carried away the Union."

"Arra', whisht! hould your tongue, Will, said Tom Flaherty, the cow-doctor; "don't be tauking of masthers. We've had enough of them any way; and sure, as the Repalers tell us, we're not to own to any masther any more but O'Blarney; he that's the pattern of boys, and fears nothing, except our letting the ould counthry go to sleep; 'for,' says he, 'if onct you let the kingdom be rocked to sleep in the cradle of quietness, and hushed with a lullaby of sweet promises, there'll be an end of ye. England never remimbers ye're alive unless whin ye're mad. Show her ye're alive and kicking too,' says he, 'and ye'll frighten her.'"

"Ay," says Will Gavin, "strike the iron while it's hot, and it will send out sparks to burn 'em; but, as I was saying, couldn't an Irishman be found in all the counthry for Miss Desmond, that she must be married to one of them English?"

"Yes," said another, "and an officer too; a dragoon ready to ride rough-shod over us at the word of command. Faith, it's too bad. I wonder what would the Repalers say to it; for if they tell us to pay no tithes, what would they tell us about paying rint to a foreigner, who has no natural right to the soil, and who'll spend every guinea of it in England."

"Why, faith," said Will Gavin, with a knowing smile, "if we know well what we're about, and mind our hits, I don't see why, when we're bringing back our Parliament to the ould counthry, we should'nt bring England, or the best of what's in it, at all events, over to keep it company. Sure it would be only fair play, for they've had the best part of Ireland. Yet no, I won't say the best; I'll only say the richest part. For many a long day they've had the potatoes, and left us the skins; the cream, and left us the skimmed milk. But when our thrue friend said the other day in the Parliament, that there was a hundred thousand Irish in London, which he surely tould 'em to frighten 'em out of their seven senses, this was a plain hint that not only could they bring back the Parliament, but the rich English too. Och! let *him* alone; he's the boy for bothering 'em; and when they think they have him quiet, with some bone they've thrown him to pick, faith it's himself that turns round on 'em when they laist expect it, and makes a speech clear and clane in their teeth. Talk of the baist in the ould story-book, that when you cut off one head, another sprung up in its place, sure's a joke to O'Blarney; he has a fresh mouth to screech at 'em every time they stop the ould one, and finds a way to slip through every noose they make to catch him. Sure, them English are the biggest fools under the sun, for they'd believe any thing; and whin they make an engagement, faith, they're for keeping it bad or good; but we know a thrick worth two of that, and that's

what our Repalers will show 'em before they're done with 'em, or my name is not Will Gavin."

"That's neither here or there," replied Tom Flaherty; "the point is how are we to hinder this Sassenach from carrying off Springmount?"

"Faith, it's aisy enough," answered half-a-dozen at a time; "knock the breath out of his body; put out it's light, and that's the shortest way of settling it."

"Yes, but when would we be afther doing it?" asked one who had been a silent auditor. "Look what a hullabaloo they're making for just only killing a policeman. What would they do if we kilt a gentleman and a Curnel into the bargain? Sure, they'd have all them dragoons at our heels, killing one-half of us, and frightening the other half out of their lives. It's betther let the Curnel alone any way; and sure I know a safer plan to keep him from taking away Springmount. Let us burn it."

"Well said, my boy," screamed half-a-dozen voices at a time. "Right for you. Sure, if it's burnt, he can only take away the ashes, and we won't begrudge him that."

The party was interrupted by the host of the Cat and Bagpipes, who declared that "though sorely against his will, he must send 'em quite entirely out of the house, as the police would be coming round to look after them."

This produced some animated reflections and lamentations on the tyranny of forcing them to go home to their beds when only three parts intoxicated, and they agreed that it was a state of things not to be borne with.

Let not the English reader imagine that this picture of the lower order of the Irish is overcharged; and yet let him not conclude that no goodness is to be found beneath the mass of brutality, sharpness, and cunning, that envelopes them. Their virtues are the genuine production of their natures, stunted and perverted in their youth, and seldom called into action. But their vices are the offspring of circumstances, originating in misrule. They have become demoralised by real or imaginary aggravation, and are hurried against their supposed oppressors either to betray or to avenge. In the Irish character all the elements of good are to be found in abundance, but these are turned into instruments of destruction by the demagogues who know how to apply the spark to inflammable and evil passions. What the Irish peasantry now are, the newspapers teeming with the fearful catalogue of their crimes but too well tell us. What they may become, will depend on freeing them from the pernicious influence of the moral incubus that now paralyses all their better feelings, and leaves them, like the infuriated bullocks driven on by the rebels in their battles in the rebellion—that memorable rebellion, which ought to be at once the warning and fearful example of the ruinous effects of not checking in time the first symptoms of disaffection, and saving this generous but misguided people from the terrible consequences of their own excesses.

## CHAPTER XX.

"Some demagogues, like Catiline, can raise a storm, who cannot, like Cromwell, rule it; thus, the Gracchi wishing to make the agrarian law the ladder of their ascent, found it the instrument of their fall; 'fracta compage ruebant.'"

The murder of the policeman seemed the signal for violence on all sides. The peasantry knew the vengeance it would call down on their heads, and the police felt there was no longer safety for them but in their numbers. The Rubicon was passed, and blood had marked its passage; hence the two passions of fear and revenge but added to the bad feelings of both parties, and rendered them reckless of consequences. When parties of the police encountered the peasantry on the roads, angry glances, threatening gestures, and mocking taunts were exchanged, and it was easy to foresee that the suppressed hatred on both sides would, like pent-in fires, soon burst forth, and make fearful havoc.

The anxiety and terror of Grace Cassidy having produced visible effects on her health, her husband was induced, by the feelings of love that still lingered in his heart for her, (but which had been quelled by the angry passions that had lately tyrannised over that once calm and happy heart,) to stay in his cottage at night, and to attend to his work by day. This prudence was a sacrifice offered up to affection, and he had not delicacy enough to conceal that it was a sacrifice. Jim, in this respect, resembled but too clearly his sex in general; even the most refined and polished of them seldom conceal any of the sacrifices they make, or what it costs to make them. This is reserved for women, and is one of the many proofs they

give of their superiority in all matters of affection and delicacy.

Larry M'Swigger had continued at Cologan, to be ready in case his testimony might be necessary in any examination as to the confession of Jack Donovan; and Grace had invited him to sojourn at the cottage, thinking that his chat of an evening might amuse Jim, and console him for his absence from the Cat and Bagpipes.

Larry had been a traveller in his youth, had seen much, and had grafted on a naturally shrewd understanding various shreds and patches of knowledge, acquired both from what he had seen and heard, that, joined to his extreme ignorance, rendered his conversation very amusing to the unfastidious tastes of his auditors.

Grace, her husband, and their guest, were enjoying their simple supper, when Jim burst forth with, "Well, Larry, what do you say now to what they're doing in England, going to send over soldiers to kill us all clear and clane? Sure the King himself has threatened us, from his very seat of justice in the Parliament of Lords, and bawled out, they say, as loud as if he wished the echo of his voice would reach us over here; but little we'd mind it if it did. We're used to echoes, and know they're made by emptiness; but didn't our friend in the Common Parliament soon tell 'em his mind about it, and say it was a bloody speech?"

"Sure he was right," said Larry. "We call the linen that stops a cut or a wound, a bloody linen, and to my thinking, the King's speech will stop many a wound being given; therefore our friend was right to call it bloody. But you see them English couldn't understand the sense of it; but I, who know the roundabout way our ministers takes to say things, and how they say one thing when they mane another, I'm never at a loss to guess what they're afther."

"It wouldn't be mannerly for me to be contradicting you, by the side of my own hearth," said Jim, "and you ould enough to be my father; but I don't think that was what O'Blarney mint."

"Never mind, Jim dear," interposed Grace, "what he meant. Whatever it was, the word was an ugly word, and a bad word to be tacked to a King's discourse, he who is the father of us all."

"He may be the father of the English," said Jim, "but, faith, if he's a father to us, sure it's a step father, for we seldom hear of him, except when he threatens us, and his name seldom comes to us except with a *Whereas* before it. Sure, the Repalers told 'em that they were wanting to treat us worse than the Algerines, which manes, to make black slaves of us."

"Och, that reminds me," said Larry, "of the terrible sight I saw on my travels, when I crost the salt-sea ocean. I never tould it to you, Mistress Cassidy, nor to you neither, Jim, and faith it will do your heart good to hear it, because it will show you that I had as great a hatred to be made a black slave as any of you, when I was young. Well then, once upon a time, as the ould story-tellers say, when I was tired of working in Ireland, and to tell you the truth, though more is the shame for me, tired of the poor creathure of a wife too, I determined to go off to one of the West India islands to make my fortune, with two or three other boys that was going. I got together every halfpenny I could rap or rend, and engaged to work my passage out, which I did, and hard work it was too, as I found to my cost.

"Well, the sights I saw on the sea I'll never forget, any way; porpusses, and grampusses, and saels, and other outlandish animals, half fish and half baist; but one thing, just to show you the difference between sea and land—I saw in the West Indies, what we calls a turtle here, and which is an elegant dove; but there is a great ugly baist that lives in the sea, and that they catches to make soup of: this shows you what terrible changes the climates, as they called it, can bring about. But that's nothing to what I'm going to tell you.

"Well, if you knew all I suffered at sea, you'd pity me; and what was worse than all, I found I had a natural fear of it. Sure, when it used to get angry, and the big green waves used to mount up as if they were going to swallow us, with a great white froth on the tops of 'em, which they often threw in our faces, I couldn't help thinking they were spirits, they had such an awful, threatening look with 'em, and I had a dread of 'em, I never felt before for any thing. Sure, I've looked when the ship seemed to be going down between two green mountains of water, and thought to myself who'll ever tell the secrets that's buried in your heart? What a wonderful sight 'twould be to see the treasures that's hid below them great waves, and the poor remains of them, that has been longed afther and cried afther, through many a long night by those that loved 'em; and to think their poor bones can never lie in holy ground,

in a dacent grave, in some clane purty church-yard among their own people, where their friends might say in passing by, 'There lies poor Jim, or Jack!' which sure would be some comfort; but them poor crathures that was swallowed up by the big cruel waves, and has ships upon ships passing over 'em, with perhaps, their own counthrymen in 'em, that can't so much as see one of their bones, och! troth, it's a sorrowful thing to think of! When I've been on duty at night, and have seen the great waves coming from a distance with their white manes moving and shining by the moon-light, sure I've thought they were the throops of death sent afther us; and when they've come quite close, I could not for the life of me help going away from the sight of 'em, and hiding myself, though all the crew laughed at me.

"But such sights as that, is no laughing matter! one feels so helpless, there is no accounting for the *danger*, and no avoiding it. Och! sure, if there's a place in the world to make a poor crathure feel his own insignificance, it's a-board ship in a storm; it's then the thought of the mighty, the terrible power of God, enters into the heart of man, and he feels he is nothing without the mercy of his Creator. Then to see the sea, when she is in a good humor, the sun playing hide-and-seek with her; one minute throwing all his golden beams over her smooth, looking-glass bosom, and next, hiding himself behind some fine purple cloud; och! it's a glorious sight. Then again, to look at the way the sea pays court to the moon, keeping so quiet, and so steady, just to reflect all its silvery brightness, and not only her round face, but hundreds of pillars of silver all spread out beneath her, just like an illumination to do her honor. Faith, I've thought to myself, 'Och, it's you sea, that can put on a fine pleasant look when you like it, just to flatter the sun and moon; but you're a deceaver, and I don't trust in you, for if only a blast of wind affronts you, 'tis you that can show the bad heart, and the black face, and rise up in fearful anger to revenge yourself.'

"I took good care not to say a word of this out loud, for fear she'd take vengeance on me; but it was passing in my mind all the time she was sending back their own shining smiles to the sun and moon, as if she was always in a good humor, when I knew how bad she could behave when neither of 'em was to the fore.

"Another terrible thing, too, that I suffered, was the draims I had a-board ship. No sooner did I shut my eyes, but I began draiming that I was on land, living under beautiful green trees, on grass softer than velvet, and birds singing all around. I smelt the very perfume of the flowers, and kept thanking God I was done with that spitfire of a rogue of a sea; when the ship lurched and I awoke to find myself, sure enough, in that terrible prison, with the frightful waves coming all around, with looks just as if they would say, 'Here we are, and we're not done with you yet.' Och! the bitterness of such awakings. Sure, even now they often come back to my mind, and whatever my throubles may be, I always thank God I'm not in the power of the deceitful sea.

"Well, sure I've bothered ye any way with this Shanohos* about the ocean, but now I'm coming to the end of my story. We arrived at a place—faith, I forgot the name of it—and a boat comes off to us filled with black nagirs, with hardly a rag on their black, shining bodies. When I saw them, faith a joke came into my head, and I cried out in Irish to 'em, 'How are ye, my white beauties?' They up and tould me in as good Irish as ever was spoken, 'Sure we're purty well; how is yourself?' This bothered me; so I made free to ax 'em how long they were there, and they tould me in Irish 'two years.' 'Two years,' says I, 'and black and woolly already? The devil a step I'll ever put on this island while I live, for, if I came out here to make my fortune, I did not come out to turn a rael nagir as my poor countrymen have turned.' So I stuck to the ship, and wouldn't go on land for all the world.

"Six weeks the ship stopped there, but never did I go out of her; I knew better; though, would you believe it? they wanted to persuade me that the crathures that spoke Irish to me were rael blacks that had been taught Irish by the Irish settlers; but I was not so foolish as to believe it, for we Irish are too 'cute. An Englishman would have swallowed such a story, but I knew betther; so back I came to Cork, facing all the dangers of the deep, frightened as I was; but any thing was betther than coming home a black with woolly hair.

"So you see, Mistress Cassidy, and you too, Jim, I suffered enough rather than submit to be made a slave. Faith, there's few has gone through so much for it."

* Irish for a long story.

"I don't think," said Jim, "that it was the slavery you minded so much as the turning black and woolly."

"Och! troth," said Larry, "'twas both; but I don't believe, Jim, that you yourself would like to see those brown curly locks of yours that's buckling round your head, turned to black wool, nor your dacent red and white face turned to an oily black. I was young then, and a clane comely boy into the bargain; but ould as I am now, with my withered-up face, that looks like a shrivelled apple, my poor eyes like burnt holes in a blanket, or bottled gooseberries in a burnt-up pie, and my few locks of hair like flakes of snow hanging on an ould blasted tree, I wouldn't wish to see myself turned into a nagir any way, bad as I am. If I had stayed to be a black, I might have come home with plinty of money, instead of being poor as I am now, on the shockarane,* here to-day and gone to-morrow. But sure it's no use to fret; a pound of sorrow they say never paid an ounce of debt, not that I have any debts, God be thanked! for, faith, no one seemed ever much inclined to trust me."

"Did you hear what your friend said in the Parliament in London about slavery, and the iron entering our souls?" interrogated Jim, resuming the train of thought that Larry's narrative had interrupted.

"I did sure enough," said Larry; "but I thought it quite rhaumeish. If he said the iron entered our bodies pretty often, there would be some sense in it, for sure the police and the soldiers are great hands at seeing what we're made of with the points of their bayonets; but as for our souls, no one but God can touch them, which is some comfort; and this I know, bekase when Bill Toban swore before the justice that Dan Tooley bait him, and threatened to send his soul to hell in five minutes, (and Bill swore, too, that he believed Dan would have done so, had he not been prevented by the bystanders,) the justice stopped him, and explained, that though any man might bait, or even kill him, no man could have power over his soul, as that was in the hands of God. Therefore, it's nonsense for the Repalers to be talking of the iron entering the soul, and sinful too, according to my notions."

"You may say what you like, Larry," replied Jim, "but if it wasn't for the Repalers we'd never know any thing of all our throubles."

"That's what I blame 'em for," said Larry; "they're always swelling our throubles, making mole-hills into mountains, as the saying is; and sure what good does this do us, except to make us more vexed? If they showed us a way to get out of 'em, I'd say something; but to be always ripping up ould sores, and never giving a plaster, sure, it's not the part of thrue friends. 'Twould be kinder to tell us to have patience, and give us good advice."

"Would you have us continue in ignorance all our born days," said Jim, "as we used to be before the Repalers let us into the rael state of things? Sure, we used to believe that the Duke of Wellington was the greatest man, the finest soldier, and the bravest general that ever commanded, till our mimbers tould us as he wasn't, and laughed at the notion of it; and one by one they pull down all the great men that we used to be so proud of, that we'd have gone to the mouth of a cannon for 'em."

"Well, then," said Larry, "are we happier or more contented, Jim, now that they have pulled down all that we used to be so proud of, and left us nothing at all to keep up the conceit in us? Many's the time, when I've been could and hungry, the thoughts that I belonged to the same counthry as the great Duke, has warmed my heart, and when I considered that he had sent his name as an honor to Ireland to the four quarters of the world, ay, faith, and farther too, to be talked of, I've felt that I could lose as many lives as a cat, ay, or even as Plutarch himself, if I had 'em, to do him a service. Sure, what's the pleasure in life, if one hasn't something to be proud of? and what is so natural as to be proud of such a man? Them that would say he isn't the greatest general that ever lived, must have hearts too small to hold any thing but their envy, and I'd deny 'em for countrymen for ever and ever. We are such droll people, that if those that are an honor and a credit to us, ain't always praising themselves, we forget 'em. We mind words more than deeds, and this great man I'm talking of, never praises himself. He laves that to others to do; for, as his brother truly said of him, 'He's fonder of conquering the enemy than of telling how he did it.' Now our mimbers pass most of their time in paying compliments to themselves, and never can be said to want a trumpeter while their own tongues can wag. Then see how the Great Captain, (but, no, I won't call him a captain, for sure he's a general, and the

* Wandering.

head of all generals, and I don't like to take away any of his grandeur,) see how he spaiks; never with big blustering words, but with a quiet and steady dacency, that shows he's in earnest. He's always thinking of the good of the counthry, and never thrying to make bad worse. Let who will be in power, it's all the same to him: as long as they do what's right, he never axes what party they belong to. Och! Jim, what ungrateful baists we must be to let any one talk against such a man, who has spent his life in fighting for us, and now gives up his ease, to think how we can be best served. Think, Jim, of the hundreds of nights he has passed without sleep; the fatigues, the dangers, the risks, he has endured; the thousands of lives that depended on his orders, and the years of anxiety he must have had, to bring off without a single spot, a reputation as difficult to be kept bright as it was hard to be gained. Sure, if poor ould Ireland no longer had a sun to shine over her, his fame would throw a light on her. And this is the man the Repalers would thry to persuade us we ought not to be proud of!"

The enthusiasm of Larry excited the latent feelings of habitual admiration that had so long dwelt in the heart of Jim.

"Faith, Larry, I believe you're right," said he; "for when you remind me of what the Duke has done, I can't help feeling as proud of him as ever, and I begin to think that those that want to pull him down, are set on by their jealousy and envy."

## CHAPTER XXI.

"Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise,
(That last infirmity of noble minds)
To scorn delight, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind fury with th' abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life."

"With fame, in just proportion, envy grows;
The man that makes a character, makes foes."

"I was looking about me, the whole of this blessed day," said Larry M'Swigger to Grace and Jim Cassidy, as they sat at their simple supper, "and I thought to myself, 'What a pity it is that a counthry which God has done so much for, man should do so much against. To see the beautiful mountains, looking so proud and grand, the trees so green and stately, the rivers so clear and rapid, and the skies more blue and laughing than anywhere else——'"

"How can you say that?" said Jim, whose present discontented state of mind led him to cavil with many of Larry's observations, "since isn't there twice more rain in Ireland than in England? and yet you're for saying, the sky is laughing."

"Faith, Jim, the poor sky is a real Irish sky, and like ourselves, is always either laughing or crying. It never, to my thinking, looks more beautiful than when after a heavy shower it brightens up and smiles on all around. It's for all the world like Mistress Cassidy, begging her pardon for talking of her when she is to the fore, for I've thought of the sky when I've seen the tears resting on her long black eyelashes, just as the drops of rain hang on the leaves, and a bright glance shine out of them same blue eyes, which looked all the brighter for the tears, as the sky does after the shower. But that's neither here nor there to what I was saying, which was, that God, praise be to His holy name! has done every thing for Ireland, and man nothing except mischief. Is there a more fruitful soil in the world? I've heard people call the earth our mother, but faith, I say it's father, mother, sister, and brother; ay, be my soul, and wife also; for it takes us to her breast when the whole world turns from us, and the sooner I'm sleeping there the betther," continued the poor old man, wiping a tear from his cheek; "for I love the poor counthry and many that's in it too well not to be sick at heart at all I see. Every thing that God gives us is turned to bad account. We have had the bravest generals, and we're now ungrateful to 'em, though they have brought honor and glory to the counthry. Our eloquence grows wild, for want of pruning; our mad thoughts governs *us*, instead of our governing *them;* our courage is shown in acts of brutality; and all that might make us a grand people, only makes us a wicked and a thoughtless one."

"Well, Larry, I never expected to hear you running down the counthry after this fashion," said Jim.

"'Tis not the counthry, but the people, I'm running down, Jim," replied Larry; "because I'm grieved to see what they are, when I think what they might be. They won't give themselves a fair chance, and only increase their throubles every day, by throwing more obstacles in the way of those who wish to serve and re-

lieve 'em. It's a terrible thing, Jim, to love one's country in the very pulses of one's heart, and yet to be obliged to feel ashamed of it; for who would have the face to stand up and boast himself an Irishman now, a title that I once thought the greatest honor upon earth for a poor man as well as a rich, when the name is stained with blood and crime, and we are looked upon at every side as scarcely better than savages?"

"Well, Larry, that baits out every thing. Savages, indeed! Faith if you were not a counthryman, and an ould friend into the bargain, and what's more than either, an ould man, I'd be for showing you we're not such savages as you think, by breaking every bone in your body, and dhriving your ivories down your throat."

"Whisht! Jim dear," said Grace, giving an imploring look at the inflamed countenance of her husband; "sure Larry didn't mane to affront you, and don't be after saying such ugly words."

Jim reached out his hand to Larry, who shook it and said, "Now hear me, Jim, quietly for a minute. I'm too ould and feeble to resent threatenings, and I know you would not hurt me; but you prove yourself all that I've been saying of the people. To show me you are not a savage, you would brutally maim me. Would not this prove to me, you were what I said? So it is with the counthry and the people. Their violence confirms every report made to their disadvantage; and their own actions speak more against them than the representations of their worst enemies. But, Jim, I'm heart-sick, so let us talk of something to comfort me; let us talk of the Irishmen that console us for being Irish. Think of the honor it is to this poor counthry, that one can't take up an Army List without being made as proud as a peacock, by seeing the numbers and numbers of Irish names, betther known all over the world, than in their own ungrateful, ignorant counthry. Sure, if Wellington is like the full moon in the middle of the sky, he has plenty of bright stars around him from his own poor little green island to keep him company. Look at the Beresfords by land and sea; there's brothers for you, and Irish brothers too! Who wouldn't be proud of 'em? Look at Londonderry, who never had a fault but being too anxious for fighting, as we all are. Then there's Cole, Packenham, Pack, and Doyle. But if I was to go through half of 'em, when would I have done? Faith, it warms my heart to think of 'em, when it is chilled by shame at the crimes of the lawless. No, Jim, let us never forget to be proud of such heroes, for if we do, our bravery and courage cannot last; for, as well may you expect a fire to continue burning without putting fuel on it, as to keep up courage and bravery when we are no longer proud of it. Sure the very brats of children running about half naked, has been known to stop when they heard all the people about 'em spaiking of the grand battles Wellington fought, and clap their little hands and cry out, 'We too will be soldiers, and be talked about.'

"But now, it is not he that has fought the battles of England and Ireland, in many a field of blood, and has for ever woven the shamrock with the laurels in his garland, that is to be our adviser, as he has been our protector; no, it's *him* that has known no fields of battle except the four courts or the assizes, and has never seen blood drawn except from broken heads of the foolish boys he has set by the ears with his burning words; it's him that's to taich us to forget all we loved and respected, and get ourselves made the laughing-stock of England, with the blustering speeches of our mimbers, and the mad agitation of ourselves, ready to take a hint for committing crimes whenever we can get it. I'm an ould man, Jim, and maybe haven't much gumption. I've seen this counthry oftenr upset, and in danger from one cause or another; but if you believe me, I never knew it so unruly or so ill-disposed as at present; and if you take my advice, and it comes from an honest and loving heart for you and your nice dacent creathure of a wife, you'll keep away from Repalers, and their rabble followers, and trust to the generosity, the good sense, and the honor and honesty of England, to bring us out of our throubles."

Grace Cassidy listened with grateful attention to the good advice of Larry to her husband. She saw that it produced more effect than all her representations had done, and she thought to herself, "Well, how proud men are, and how obstinate when advice comes from a woman, and above all, a wife; Larry has only repeated the same advice that I have so unsuccessfully given, and to which Jim paid no attention, and now he seems sensible of its value. But no matter, as long as he follows it, who it comes from; sure it would be too much happiness for me to think *I* had brought him to his right mind, and I'll bless Larry for ever if *he* does it."

Grace, in this instance, displayed a superiority over the generality of her sex, of which she, perhaps, was little conscious; for if there is a point on which women are especially sensitive, it is in their jealousy of the influence of other persons over the minds of those they love. This jealousy they themselves attribute to wounded affection, while the ill-natured set it down to the effects of wounded vanity. Something of both feelings may, perhaps, unite in producing it; but, we are loth to search too profoundly into causes whose effects are at least flattering to the sterner sex, though they may not always be agreeable. The most painful and humiliating epoch in the life of a woman is, when she has discovered that *he* on whom she has anchored her hopes of happiness is deficient in intellect, and yet has too much pride or too little love, to supply the deficiency by attending to her counsels. A woman of merely ordinary understanding, actuated by a strong affection, acquires wisdom by suffering; and, short-sighted as she might be for herself, becomes prescient for him she loves and would save, and whose destruction engulfs all her hopes.

## CHAPTER XXII.

"No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife;
Each season look'd delightful as it past
To the fond husband and the faithful wife."

The time now approached for the marriage of Miss Desmond and Colonel Forrester. The lawyers had sent the marriage settlement, which had taken a less than ordinary time to arrange, from the unusual circumstance, that no obstacles, objections, or explanations had been started by opposing interests. Colonel Forrester had left all to the superintendence of his future father-in-law, and submitted his title-deeds, rent-roll, &c. to the inspection of Mr. Desmond's solicitor, who was surprised to observe the confidence or carelessness of the Colonel in the affair, as he naturally expected to have found every covenant debated by the legal adviser of the lover.

So little of love appears in the customary financial arrangements for marriages, that, on reading a settlement between contracting parties, one would be led to imagine that the bandeau which is supposed to envelope the eyes of love, was already removed, and that two enemies, instead of two lovers, were about to enter into a treaty offensive and defensive, the conditions of which required the strictest investigation. Every contingency of mishap and misconduct that can arrive to poor frail human nature is calculated upon; and, while hearts and inclinations are becoming but as one, separate interests and purses are assured to her, whose pecuniary interest ought to depend on him on whom her happiness must depend.

No homily in the English language could so impressively convey the disenchanting conviction of the fickleness of affection, and the instability of felicity, as the provisions in a modern marriage settlement, which are as little in harmony with religious feeling as they are in unison with love. Were women to peruse such documents, never could they approach the altar with the idea that the engagement about to be contracted, was either so awful or so sacred as all pure and elevated minds are prone and desirous to consider it. "Those whom God has put together let no man separate," seems to be forgotten, as more provisions are made for the possibility of a hostile separation, than for that of preserving and cementing the irrevocable, though dissoluble bond of union.

How far such provisions may influence the future destinies of the contracting parties, we will not stop to inquire; but we should like to see marriage made a less business-like speculation, and that she who resigns her affections and her liberty into the care of him she loves, should not contemplate a possibility of aught save death dividing them.

Mr. Desmond was not to be surpassed in generosity by Colonel Forrester. He made no distinction or separate interests between his daughter and future son-in-law, and the "What, Sir, will you not tie up this estate, and strictly entail such and such a property?" was checked by his prompt and explicit instructions.

The marriage of the lovers was celebrated in the parish church, the same sacred spot that had witnessed the baptism of Frances, in the presence of a few of the most intimate friends of the family. The happy couple did not, after partaking of an elegant *déjeuné à la fourchette* at the mansion of the bride's father, (to which a distinguished circle of fashionables were *not* invited,) set off in a splendid new post chariot and four, with postilions and outriders, to pass the honeymoon at some distant inn, or elegant villa, where the blushes of the bride are exposed to the gaze of ad-

miring waiters and smiling chambermaids, or to the more respectful, though scarcely less embarrassing observation of strange servants. There was no rich trousseau displayed, or elegant corbeille exhibited, for the excitation of the envy of friends and the vanity of the presenter and *presented;* no! the tasteful and well-chosen wardrobe that had adorned Miss Desmond, or rather that she had adorned, since her departure from London a few months before, was considered sufficiently rich for Mrs. Forrester. That apparel which had robed her lovely person when she attracted the admiration of the lover, was thought good enough, and likely enough, to retain the affection of the husband; so that the nuptials of the lovely Frances Desmond and her enamored bridegroom were as unlike "a marriage in high life," as *they* were dissimilar to the generality of lovers to be found in that circle.

Their honeymoon was passed in the paternal mansion at Springmount, and their happiness was enhanced by its being partaken by their affectionate and gratified parents, who were not, like most parents under such circumstances, left in solitude to feel that in acquiring a son-in-law they had lost a daughter.

"How I wish, dearest Frances," said Colonel Forrester, "that I could see this fine country in a state of tranquillity, and the good qualities of the people allowed to develope themselves! I have liked Ireland from my first arrival, but now, can I do otherwise than love the country that has given you birth?"

A sweet smile repaid the compliment, and Frances said:—"You will not, I'm sure, entertain a less affection for me, when I confess that I should never have allowed myself to feel towards you as I do, had you disliked my poor abused country. I must acknowledge it is not the most happy place to live in; and when I have returned from dear tranquil England, and seen the melancholy contrast which ill-fated Ireland offered to the scenes I had left, I have been selfish enough to wish to reside altogether in England. Judge, then, how well I can appreciate the liberality of liking this country under all its disadvantages; and how I must esteem the person who can be content to remain here. I see and lament the faults of the Irish," continued Frances; "but I pity and love the people notwithstanding their faults, and would gladly make any personal sacrifice to ameliorate their condition, or to assist in forwarding their civilisation."

"We will join in the task," replied Colonel Forrester; "with kindness and patience much may be effected."

"You must make up your mind," observed Frances, "not to be greatly surprised or incensed, if you find our efforts unavailing or repaid with ingratitude. Look at all my dear father and mother have done, through a sense of duty, giving up for years their friends and society in England, society and friends so congenial to their tastes, to live on their estate in a sort of honorable exile. Until a short time ago, this truly conscientious and disinterested sacrifice seemed to be felt and valued by their dependants, and they were universally beloved; but the voice of the agitators silenced that of gratitude, and those who were the most attached to our family, are now taught to regard us with suspicion, if not with dislike. In no other country must the principle of doing good for its own sake, be so much acted upon as here; for, one has seldom the pleasure of seeing one's efforts crowned with success, and still more seldom that of having them acknowledged. A landlord who had passed his life as my father has done, in the most conscientious and kind discharge of the duties which that character imposes, would find his popularity fall to the ground before a Repealer's first burst of hyperbolical eloquence, and the good *actions* of a long life thrown into the shade by an inflammatory string of tropes, metaphors, and similes, artfully addressed to the passions of their dupes; and, alas! those who mislead them, are rich in these tinsel attributes, and in these alone. My dear father was giving an instance the other day, of how little impression solid *acts* of service made on the Irish, in comparison with *professions;* his illustration of this peculiarity was derived from the career of Sir John Newport, who has passed his life in the most active and judicious exertions for Ireland; and the consequence is, that the lower orders not only neither regard nor revere, but do not even name him, while they applaud to the very skies any one of their mouthing orators with 'Repeal' on his lips, and self-aggrandisement in his heart. All this is very discouraging, but we must have patience, and hope for better times."

"What appears to me most disadvantageous to Ireland," said Colonel Forrester, "is the want of that respectable middle class that exists in England, and which has such an influence on the lower orders. Here I observe few, if any, of the farmers who have such weight, and to whom the

laborers refer as guides and examples in England. Men who have stakes in the country are unwilling to risk what they possess; and the most eloquent agitator who ever inflamed an Irish rabble, would find his rhetoric fall unheeded on ears accustomed to the chink of money. We English, who have not lived in Ireland some months, conclude that the meetings so numerously attended there, are composed of the middle class, and consequently we attach an importance to them as organs of public opinion. But if it was generally known that they are for the most part composed of the very dregs of the people, the sediment that ought to be at the bottom, but 'which rises upwards when the nation boils,' we should think differently, and cease to wonder that, to a set of ignorant and penniless men who have nothing to lose, and are easily led to hope that something may be gained, the harangues of the wordy and inflammatory Repealers are as a law which they blindly adopt to work the will of their crafty leaders, who use them as pioneers to break down all that intercepts their own march in the career of selfish policy and overreaching ambition.

"One thing we must admit, dearest," continued Colonel Forrester, "namely, that had this country not been dreadfully misgoverned, the agitators who now occupy so much attention, would either have been usefully and honorably filling the situation to which talent seldom fails to elevate men in free countries, or they would have had no opportunities of making a mischievous use of it. Had the distinguished individual who now sits on the woolsack in England been an Irishman, and a Catholic, what might he not have been instead? Would the powerful talents with which Providence has gifted him, remain unemployed? And if no field of distinction was open to them, who can say that disappointed ambition, led on by the consciousness of innate power, might not have made him who now presides over law an open violater of it? We are all the creatures of chance and circumstance to a certain degree. Great talents are seldom, if ever, unaccompanied by ambition. Under other and happier aspects, he who convulses Ireland might have been the pacificator, for no one can deny that he has talents to be any thing he pleases; and did England labor under the misery and disqualifications that have oppressed Ireland for centuries, Lord —— might be an agitator instead of a chancellor

"The talents of such men as he who governs the lower classes in Ireland, ought to be public property, and should constitute part of the riches of a country. Is it not melancholy that misrule should have turned them from their natural channel, and that, like some fine stream, meant to fertilise a country, stopped in its course and bursting into violence from being checked, it overflows, and, bearing down the riches it might have so much enhanced, is only to be traced by the ruin it has spread?"

"Is it possible, dearest, that you are an advocate for agitators?" said Frances. "You almost persuade me to pity instead of disliking them."

"I look to *cause* when I trace effect," said Colonel Forrester; "and though I shudder at the mischief to which agitation has led and may yet lead, candor obliges me to own, that few men possessed of the talents of the arch-agitator, could, under the untoward circumstances in which he found himself, have resisted to be what he is. He might have been a great man; at present he is only a remarkable one.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

"But they do only strive themselves to raise,
Through pompous pride and foolish vanity;
In th' eyes of people they put all their praise,
And only boast of arms and ancestry;
But virtuous deeds, which did those arms first give
To their grandsires, they care not to achieve."

The letters Colonel Forrester had written to his family in England, announcing his marriage, had been answered by cordial and affectionate congratulations from all. That from his sister, Lady Oriel, breathed the most tender prayers and wishes for his happiness; but a tone of melancholy, almost amounting to solemnity, pervaded her letter, and threw a damp over the spirits of her brother. He felt as if the earnestness with which she prayed for a continuance of *his* happiness, conveyed an indefinable impression that her own was not equally secure; and a vague dread that all was not well with her, hung over his mind.

The family at Springmount accepted an invitation to dine at Lord Abberville's, a nobleman who resided near them. They found the few fashionables the neighborhood could muster, assembled to meet them. Even the remote district of the county of Waterford could boast its fashionables and exclusives, for where do not folly and pretension penetrate?

Lord Abberville owed his title to the Union, and a certain, or rather uncertain, portion of his income to a judicious and persevering system of jobbing, only known in Ireland. The rents of his overlet property were paid by presentments which he had influence with the grand jury of the county to get passed, and which allowed large sums to be expended in making roads over his estates; the work to be done by his tenants, and the money to find its way into his coffers. Presentments for roads never required, and where a horse-track was all that was necessary, passed at every assizes, until his pnoperty was intersected by as many lines as a miniature map of Europe; while the roads really necessary for establishing communications for agricultural or commercial purposes were totally neglected.

Few persons ever theoretically or practically understood the whole arcana of the system of jobbing so perfectly as Lord Abberville, and few had derived more advantages from it. Can it, therefore, be wondered at, that he was strenuously opposed to every attempt to reform the old state of things, and was loud and vehement in decrying innovations, or, as he called them, projects for the subversion of the constitution. Every change introduced to correct the abuses under which the country had been so long impoverished for the enrichment of a few, was considered by him as spoliation of his property, and resented as acts of crying and flagrant injustice. He grew pathetic when he expatiated on such hardships, and inwardly cursed the march of intellect which had rendered them necessary."

Lord Abberville was a representative peer, and had supported every government that had ruled the country since he enjoyed a seat in the House of Lords. Indeed, the possibility of opposing ministers, who had any thing to give away, had never entered his head; though it has been asserted on more than one occasion, that he had threatened to vote against them, unless certain sinecures were granted to his near relatives, and certain advantages accorded to himself. But this, we are willing to believe, was mere scandal, having too good an opinion of peers in general, and of Irish peers in particular, to believe that any of them would be capable of such conduct.

Lady Abberville was a woman of fashion in Ireland, and a complaisant follower of women of fashion in England. She was indefatigable in her exertions to be useful to the patronesses of the exclusive circle in which her activity had succeeded in getting her tolerated; and she would drive, ride, or walk, from one end of the town to the other, to execute their high behests, and perform all the disagreeable parts of the duties that devolved on them. Was a party to be got up on a short notice? she was despatched to entreat the attendance of the desired guests. Was some unlucky person to be cut? she was appointed to perform the operation; and far from feeling the humiliating position in which she had placed herself, she gloried in it. She kept up an extensive correspondence, knew every thing that was going on everywhere, and could amuse with her gossip the tedious hours of *les grand dames* between the *déjeuné* and the promenade. She possessed a power of ubiquity as extraordinary as her loquacity, and was as humble and complaisant with the magnates of the land and their high-born ladies, as she was *brusque* and impertinent to those whom she considered to be her inferiors. *Tracasserie* was as congenial to her, as repose and peace are to others. Her *mauvaise langue* had become proverbial, and its results were to involve her in constant explanations, in which she was accused of showing a philosophical disregard to veracity, the dictates of which she seemed to consider too obsolete for her practice.

The presence of Lord and Lady Abberville in their county was always hailed with dread by their neighbors; they only came to raise the supplies for carrying on the campaign in England, or to get up some political address to convey an impression in England that his lordship had weight in Ireland. The delusion occasioned by these stratagems constituted the only reason for his visits being tolerated at the Treasury; where he was in the habit of intruding them for the purpose of having it announced in the papers, that on such or such a day Lord Abberville had an interview with the First Lord of the Treasury, which announcement, being always copied into the Irish papers, failed not to produce its effect there. Thus, by passing in England as a man who had influence in Ireland, and in Ireland as a nobleman who had considerable weight in England, he contrived to impose on both nations, impressing them with a mutual bad opinion of the sagacity of the other; for, the First Lord of the Treasury of each administration that had held the reins of government has been heard to say, "What a country

Ireland must be, and what barbarous people the Irish, when such a man as Lord Abberville can have any influence with them!" And the gentry of Ireland, ever prone to stigmatise England, have been known to dwell with bitter sarcasms on the English ministry being so credulous as to believe that such a talentless and unprincipled jobber as the peer should have power to be of use to them in Ireland.

Lady Abberville profited by the political profligacy of her husband, which she aided and abetted to the utmost of her power; but she held his abilities and opinions in perfect scorn, and perhaps the only sentiment common to each was, a contemptuous dislike of the other.

The guests at Abberville-house consisted of two or three of the neighboring families, the General commanding the district, and two field officers of the regiment in the neighborhood.

The host and hostess assumed their most bland smiles to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Desmond, and Col. and Mrs. Forrester, as Lady Abberville felt they might not only be useful acquaintances in Ireland, where the fortune and character of Mr. Desmond gave him great influence, but the connection was a desirable one to be kept up in England. The relative importance of each of the guests might be ascertained by the diplomatic attentions paid them by the lord and lady of the mansion, which were *empressé*, coldly polite, or indifferent, according to their supposed capabilities of forwarding the host's plans. The General was *fete*, because a plot of barren land, which Lord Abberville had tried various modes of getting rid of, was now discovered by his lordship to be most admirably adapted for building a barrack on; this ground was to be disposed of to Government for not more than six times its value. The opinion of the General as to the eligibility of the situation for a barrack, would probably decide the Government in buying the land; and the opinion of Mr. Desmond and the other gentlemen invited, as to the necessity of having a large body of troops on the spot, and consequently of erecting a barrack to contain them, would decide its being built.

It was settled between the host and hostess, that while one harangued the gentlemen in the dining-room on the advantages of having troops and a barrack, the other should impress on the minds of the ladies the improvement such an event must produce to the neighborhood. Young men of family and fortune, with which the military profession abounded, would be thrown amongst them, balls and private theatricals would be the certain result, and what such exhilarating amusements and near vicinity might lead to, was implied so clearly as to enlist the mammas and daughters of her circle most warmly in the interest of Lady Abberville.

The dinner passed off much as all dinners in similar houses pass. The more *recherché* part of the guests detected various proofs of the incompetence of the *artiste* to the task he had attempted, and pronounced him not skilled in the *arcanum recondite* of *Monsieur Ude's cuisine;* while the less fastidious, who looked more to the quantity than the quality of the repast, averred it to be excellent.

The interesting investigations of the comparative merits of sherry and madeira, of dry and sweet champagne, and the equally important question whether hock was or was not better when iced, had given place to local topics, when Lady Abberville, anxious to show her importance to some of her less fashionable friends, led the conversation to England. She had received letters that day from the Duchess of Wellborough, and the Marchioness of Nottingham, filled with reproaches for staying so long away from them. Indeed, she had promised ere they allowed her to depart from London, that she would return in two months, "but it was so hard" (bowing to her guests) "to leave her own agreeable neighborhood, that she always found it difficult to tear herself away."

This compliment of course elicited a flattering rejoinder from some of the persons who concluded themselves to be designated in the circle of agreeable neighborhood! and then Lady Abberville, resuming the conversation, observed, that at this moment her absence from England was peculiarly unfortunate, as her friends wished to consult her as to the possibility of continuing to receive a lady who had placed herself in a very false position. The elderly ladies looked grave, and the young ones of the party thought it necessary to fix their eyes on their plates, and to blush, while the hostess, "on scandalous thoughts intent," proceeded to state, that it was indeed a very difficult case to decide on, as, though much publicity and scandal had taken place, the husband of the lady in question had continued to live with her. The Duchess of Wellborough and Lady Nottingham were disposed to give her their countenance, but she must say, she thought it a case in which an example

ought to be made, as the lady had been a very prominent person in society, and had frequently marred the regulations and exclusions of the Lady Patronesses by an affected good nature, repeatedly giving admissions to persons of no sort of fashion, to whose solicitations the other patronesses had turned a deaf ear. "Altogether," continued Lady Abberville, "I never liked the lady. She had too much pretension for my taste—had the rage for encouraging *les beaux arts*, and doing a thousand other equally *outré* things; and as for getting her to join our clique in the measures we so often find it necessary to adopt, it was out of the question. She opposed herself to cutting or leaving off people, and in fact, always gave us trouble by never being *d'accord* with the other Lady Patronesses."

Mrs. Kennedy, a well-meaning but obtuse country lady, who was present, turned to her daughter and said, "You see, Kate, I told you that Lady Abberville was one of the patronesses at Almack's, though you tried to persuade me she was not."

This *mal-apropos* observation, originating in the use of the *us*, evidently discomposed the self-complacency of the hostess, and as evidently amused the rest of the guests; while, to avoid the necessity of giving a definite answer, which she felt the persevering obtusity of Mrs. Kennedy would endeavor to elicit, she interrupted her observations by adding, "How very incurious you all are! No one has asked me to name the fair delinquent. Now, in England, fifty questions would have been asked, and as many guesses made, before I had got half through my statement. Does this difference proceed from your being less curious, or more good-natured than our English neighbors? or, as I suppose, does it originate in your ignorance of the parties in question, which makes you indifferent to what has put all the fashionable world in England in a fever? Well, then, the heroine of this, what shall I call it? tragedy, comedy, or drama in high life, is—Lady Oriel."

Mrs. Forrester felt almost ready to drop off her chair when the name of Lady Oriel was pronounced, and she stole a glance at her husband, whose face became pale as death, and then was suffused with crimson. Mr. and Mrs. Desmond were the only persons at the table aware of the near relationship of Lady Oriel to Colonel Forrester; and they, pitying his embarrassment, made some remarks to draw the attention of the party to another subject. Mrs. Forrester would have given the world to be alone with her husband that she might speak comfort to him, or, if that was impossible, share his chagrin; and never did a few minutes that the ladies remained in the *salle a manger*, appear so long to her.

At length Lady Abberville arose, and led the way to the drawing-room; but, before quitting the room, Mrs. Forrester exchanged an affectionate glance with her husband; a glance which spoke volumes to them both. Frances had never liked Lady Abberville, but now she felt an antipathy towards her; she detected the covert envy, hatred, and malice, that instigated this calumny of the young and beautiful Lady Oriel; and turned in disgust from a woman whose reputation had through life been so often pulled to pieces, that, though patched up, the rents were visible, proving the truth of the homely French proverb, "*Une réputation plâtrée est comme un bas raccommodé qui laisse toujours voir ou la défaut existait.*" No one had presumed on, and profited by, the indulgence of the world more largely than had Lady Abberville, and no one showed a greater disposition to deprive others of a similar advantage. Hers had not only been "a youth of folly, and old age of cards," but a youth and maturity of flirting, and an old age of scandal, envy, and defamation. Every man and every woman's *tongue* had been against her, and hers was now turned against all whom she did not fear, and they were few, but sacred in her eyes; as, all the advantages and disadvantages to be derived from being on good or bad terms with them having been maturely weighed, and the former found to preponderate, amity was proved to be the wiser course, and prudence therefore triumphed over malice.

Mrs. Forrester seized the first opportunity of approaching her mother, without exciting attention; a pressure of the hand showed how deeply she sympathised in the feelings of her daughter; and an air of cold and dignified politeness on the part of both ladies towards the intriguing hostess—which neither all her most amusing anecdotes of fashionable scandal, nor her deferential attentions, could change into a more cordial manner—made her feel that something, she could not imagine what, had gone wrong.

Colonel Forrester sat in agony in the *salle a manger*. Now was revealed to him the cause of the melancholy that pervaded his sister's last letter. Why had she not told him all, instead of allow-

ing the dreadful news to break thus unexpectedly upon him? And yet knowing her as he did, feeling convinced of her purity, it was impossible to believe that she could have merited the scandal which had fallen on her name. No, his dear sister was innocent; was the victim of false appearances; and, with a husband so morbidly susceptible even to the approach of ignominy, what must be her situation? His mind was in a chaos; and, to the continual references for his opinion, made by his garrulous host, always on subjects immediately or remotely connected with his own personal interest, Colonel Forrester only replied by an absent bow or incoherent monosyllables.

Counting the moments with impatience until he could leave a house now become hateful to him, as the scene of the defamation of his dear sister, and of the profanation of her name by the viper tongue of its mistress, he sat in painful reflection on the odious theme. When Lady Oriel had first become the subject of conversation, he could scarcely refrain from denouncing the slanderer, and vindicating the fair fame of his sister; but a moment's consideration had taught him the imprudence of a measure which could only have tended to compromise still more, not only her dignity but his own. A doubt of his sister's purity had never entered his mind, and his heart overflowed with tenderness and pity when he thought of her. He felt that she was exposed to humiliations which her delicate feelings were little calculated to support; and, above all, exposed to the morbid susceptibility of her husband, who would shrink under every infliction, until he made her endure the most insupportable of all annoyance, that of having drawn publicity and defamation on another, and that other, not only incapable of despising the unmerited stigma, but even of concealing the sufferings which it caused.

The host's self-compliments, demands for approbation, and insinuations of influence with "the powers that be," were at last concluded, and the gentlemen joined the ladies in the drawing-room. Colonel Forrester would have unceremoniously sought them an hour before, but that he dreaded to find himself with Lady Abberville, even still more than to be compelled to listen to the verbose, oft-beginning, never-ending, histories of her Lord. Mr. Desmond entered into all his feelings; and the sympathy of his wife, father, and mother-in-law, if it prevented not the wound offered to his peace, at least carried oil and wine to it.

Those are indeed fortunate who find, when sorrow assails them, that friendship administers an anodyne; and as this good fortune becomes more rare, it is, like all rarities, enjoyed still more poignantly. There is no situation into which our own errors can plunge us, wherein we do not call up pride or fortitude to support us, and enable us to forego the commiseration of friends; but when some one dear to us has drawn the burning coals of scandal on her devoted head, then it is that we most require sympathy to enable us to bear up against the tide of defamation; and to prove to us that we are sufficiently loved, to gain forbearance for the object of our interest, a belief in her innocence, or pity for her errors.

Colonel Forrester knew that she whom he had chosen for his wife, would take his affirmation for the honor of his sister; and so would her parents. But how dreadful to be compelled to affirm that which ought never to have been doubted! and of a sister, too, of whom he was so justly proud!

Music, as ill executed as the company were ill assorted, filled up the weary hour-and-a-half between the arrival of the gentlemen in the drawing-room and the announcement of the carriages. The listening to bad music was one of the many penances the diplomatic Lady Abberville imposed on herself during her exile in Ireland. Not to ask Miss Kennedy and the other Misses to play and sing, would have deeply mortified the young ladies, and offended their mammas, who failed not to repeat in all circles, how charmed Lady Abberville had been with Kate or Maria's singing and execution on the piano-forte.

No sooner did the family from Springmount find themselves alone in the coach, than Colonel Forrester declared, that what he had heard relative to his sister had given him such pain, that he had determined to go to England. Mr. Desmond immediately said, "We will all go, my dear son, for our presence may be useful; at all events we will not be separated from you when you have any annoyance to undergo."

Mrs. Desmond also expressed her kind wishes, and Frances placed her hand in his, as with animation she declared her impatience to be with her dear sister, whom she had already learned to love, but now doubly so, because she doubly required the affection of her friends.

Hasty preparations were made for their

departure from Ireland, and the journey was performed as expeditiously as was consistent with the comfort of Mr. and Mrs. Desmond. On their arrival in London, Colonel Forrester wrote to his sister, announcing his intention of paying her a visit, accompanied by his wife. He did not touch on the reports that had reached him, as he wished the first notice of them should come from Lady Oriel. Indeed, he only desired to be made acquainted with the real state of affairs, that he might know how best to remedy the evil; for he felt that the retiring habits and extreme sensitiveness of Lord Oriel peculiarly unfitted him for taking the necessary steps in the painful situation in which his wife was placed.

The return of the post brought him a warm invitation from Lord Oriel for the whole party to proceed to Oriel Park, and a letter from his sister; before perusing which, it is necessary for us to make our readers acquainted with Lord and Lady Oriel.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

"Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those;
Favors to none, to all she smiles extends,
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike!"

Lady Oriel was a young and lovely woman, remarkable for talent, vivacity, and that *esprit de société, qui met tout en train*. Mistress of a fine house, *bien montée*, and placed by an indulgent husband at the head of a large fortune, she was one of the leaders of *haut ton*, and bore her blushing honors so good-naturedly, if not meekly, that she might almost be pardoned her success. So proverbial had her good-nature become, that she was by the satirical considered and called the "Refuge of the Destitute;" for if the wife of some county member living at the other side of Oxford-street, and blessed with two daughters, the softened images of their sapient papa and common-place mamma, wished to exhibit herself and progeny at Almack's, and, to accomplish this desirable project, had assailed, but assailed in vain, all the other patronesses, Lady Oriel was *la dernière ressource*, and a resource that rarely failed. Did some young and thoughtless woman, whose beauty had excited still more female enemies than male admirers, find herself in that perilous condition of being barely tolerated where she had been sought, and more than one-half of the society standing aloof to observe how she was received by the other, Lady Oriel's frank shake hands, cordial *accueil*, or *apropos* invitation to a ball or *soirée bien choisie*, turned the scale in her favor, and re-established her, if not "in decencies for ever," at least in fashionable society. Did a young painter or sculptor, pining in obscurity, wish to exhibit his personification of the *beau idéal* that haunted his visions and grew beneath his hand, Lady Oriel's elegant *salons* received his work; where her bland smile and just commendation found for it admirers and purchasers among those who had hardly deigned to remark it in a less dignified asylum.

Lady Oriel's beauty was so regular, her air so *distingué*, and her manner so *comme il faut*, and withal so fascinating, that her reputation as a first-rate *belle* was not merely an *affaire de convention*. I really do believe, though long experience has rendered me sceptical on such points, that even without her husband's rent-roll of sixty thousand a year (which always throws a heavy balance into the scale in which beauty, talents, and manners are weighed), she would always have been considered as a most captivating woman; indeed, an irrefragable proof of the correctness of this opinion is, that her husband maintained it after a union of four years—an argument that must silence all sceptics.

But though the beauty, talents, and accomplishments of Lady Oriel were such as fell to the lot of few; her faults, alas! though they were only those which too generally attend such qualities, threw a shade on them that cast its sombre hue o'er many a future year:—but let me not anticipate. Lady Oriel had married at seventeen, and made what might indeed have been called a most desirable match. Lord Oriel was five-and-twenty, remarkably handsome, good-looking, well-informed, good-tempered, of an ancient family, and enjoying not only a very large, but that now rare possession, an unencumbered fortune; and, rarely, as it happens, the last-mentioned circumstance had little if any influence in the choice of his wife, who really married him because she preferred him to all others. Theirs was in truth a union of affection!

Lord Oriel to an easiness of disposition that shrank from trouble, conjoined a delicate susceptibility on many points that was often opposed to it. He wished—nay

more, expected—that those he loved should anticipate his feelings and guess his sentiments; and when this, as has too often been the case, did not occur, he retired in silence, the arrow of disappointment rankling in his breast, to brood over his supposed wrongs, when a kind and frank exposition might have realised all his wishes.

Lady Oriel's besetting sin was coquetry; commenced in a wish to please (let us call it by no harsher name), it animated all her pursuits, and guided all her actions. This desire to fascinate equally influenced her in her bearing and conduct to both the old and the young: in it originated the air of captivated attention with which she listened to the aged and polished *raconteur;* the piquant smile with which she repaid the young and fashionable *homme de bonne compagnie* for his sallies; the suavity which characterised her intercourse with her own sex, to each of whom she had something *amiable* to say; and even the joyous game of romps, or pretty stories, with which she made captive the he rts and ears of all the children she encountered.

Yet let me do her the justice to say, there was nothing artificial in all this. Happy and pleased with herself, she wished to please and render happy all who surrounded her; and this habit, by indulgence, so grew on her, that it soon became incurable, and the *frais* made to accomplish it but too evident.

During the first few months of her marriage, which were passed in the country, paying and receiving the visits of all the relations and neighbors of her husband, he was proud of her success. When the old dwelt on her praises, and the eyes of the young sparkled when she appeared, he shared her triumph, nay, attributed the pains she took to please to her wish of gratifying him by attentions to his friends; and he repaid her efforts by a thousand fond commendations.

But when, arrived in London, among strangers, he saw the same *frais* made day after day and night after night, he began to think it was unnecessary, if not undignified; and as he stood aloof—wincing and witnessing the air half *nonchalant* of some, and *trop empressé* of others, surrounding his lovely wife, basking beneath the sunshine of her smile and the summer-lightnings of her playful wit somewhat too animatedly displayed—he wished her success had been less general, or at least that less pains had been taken to obtain it. He felt hurt that she did not remark that he no longer participated in her triumph; he daily expected some tender reproach, which would give him a good opportunity of hinting his disapproval; but his tacit acquiescence passed with her for tacit approbation, and she continued to throw her fascinations around, unconscious that she was wounding the heart most dear to her on earth, and encouraging a host of pretenders, whose attentions, and the evident pleasure with which they were received, excited observations injurious to her delicacy, if not to her fame.

Among the host of admirers (though as yet they had not dared to avow themselves as such) who followed in her train, Lord Delmore was the most dangerous. Handsome, clever, well-educated, and highly polished in his manners—but cold-hearted, calculating, and unimaginative, the success he had met with in London and on the Continent had fostered his natural vanity, until it had become almost overweening; and his selfishness, that vice so unpardonable in the young, was proverbial with those who knew him. Lady Oriel's position attracted, and her beauty captivated him; her animation in his presence he attributed to her wish of fixing him in her chains; and, undoubting the success of his final conquest, he played with her as a skilful angler plays with the fish he is about to ensnare: one day coldly polite, replying to all her sallies with an air of pre-occupation, until he had piqued her into something like interest; and the next all attention, seeming to dwell on each word and movement of hers with that deep impassioned sentiment so flattering to woman's vanity. Lord Delmore had ruined more female reputations than any young man about town; and the good name of many a woman whose virtue had resisted his arts, fell a sacrifice to his inuendoes and insidious attentions—attentions always calculated to impress the most false conclusions on the minds of the beholders.

He soon became a daily visitor at Oriel House; Lord Oriel remarked it with bitterness of feeling, and became gradually more cold and reserved towards his wife, thinking that she must and ought to have guessed his sentiments, and lamenting her total want of sympathy with them.

Lady Oriel became piqued by the visible coldness and want of attention of her husband; and, comparing it with the *devouement* of Lord Delmore, accused the former of negligence and unkindness, of which every day furnished new proofs. She therefore determined to show him,

that, though *he* might regard her with indifference, she could excite the most lively interest in others.

Alas! women look more to *effect* than to cause. They all feel, but how few can reason! and men whose duty, whose interest it is, to reflect on this peculiarity, seldom give themselves the trouble to think on the subject until it is too late. I believe it is Fontenelle who says that women have a fibre more in the heart, and a cell less in the brain, than men; it is this fibre that responds to "the nerve where agonies are born," so that all that women want in reasoning powers, they make up for in feeling. Dearly have they paid for this additional fibre; and it is not until age has unstrung its energies, that it ceases to vibrate notes of wo.

But to return to our subject. Lady Oriel, like all women in a similar situation, became insensible to the observations to which the marked attentions of Lord Delmore subjected her. They had been so gradual, that her mind had become accustomed to them; and, free from guilt, or even the apprehension of guilt, she was fearless of calumny.

When, day after day, her morning visitors, male and female, found her *tête-a-tête* in her boudoir with Lord Delmore, an album or poem open before them, and he seeming to think (and showing that he so thought) the interruption an ill-timed intrusion, the visitors gradually dropped off, observing, with a shake of the head or malicious smile, that they were *de trop* at Grosvenor Square.

When Lady Oriel appeared in public, Lord Delmore was sure to be seen near her. In the Park he was always close to her carriage, and he observed, and discovered with pleasure, though she little suspected it, that their *liaison* was now looked on as established in the coteries in which they moved.

And now was the time that Lady Oriel felt the want of some female relation or friend, to hint to her the danger of her position, or to take from its danger, by breaking in upon the daily *tête-a-tête* with Lord Delmore. Over and over again had Lord Oriel decided on speaking or on writing to her, but still delayed his intention, hoping that she would render such a painful step unnecessary, by becoming aware of her own danger. Yet still she went on, and each day added something to the danger, or if not to the danger, to the appearance of impropriety, to which Lord Delmore's attentions exposed her.

How many women have been lost by this false, this mistaken delicacy on the part of a husband, when a temperate or kind remonstrance might have saved them from ruin, disgrace, and endless remorse! and while a husband temporises, even with his own anxiety, by thinking that parliament will soon be up, or that at such or such a time his departure from town must break the intimacy that offends him, the *liaison* becomes established; or some imprudence, without actual guilt, commits the reputation of the wife, who, finding herself a subject of public scandal, to avoid encountering the reproaches or cold austerity of an offended husband, throws herself forever outside the pale of forgiveness.

The train of respectful admirers that used to hover round the steps of Lady Oriel, by degrees dropped off. They became less restrained in their manner towards her, when they encountered her by chance. And though the high breeding of her tone prevented their presuming to treat her with the insulting familiarity which marked their conversation with others, there was still sufficient change to prove to the initiated, that they suspected she was no longer entitled to the profound respect she formerly deserved and obtained.

## CHAPTER XXV.

"Know,
Without or star, or angel for their guide,
Who worship God, shall find him. Humble love,
And not proud reason, keeps the door to heaven;
Love finds admission, where proud Science fails."

We left Jim Cassidy, though somewhat loth, spending his evenings at his own cottage, instead of, as formerly, visiting the Cat and Bagpipes; and for the first time of her life, Grace accepted joyfully a sacrifice, though she saw it was unwillingly and uncheerfully made.

Hard is the fate of her who is compelled to accept of such, and yet be thankful that they are made! Poor Grace had sensibility and delicacy enough to feel all this as keenly as the most refined heroine of romance, though she could not express it so well.

Jim would sit in moody silence, his naturally open brow knit into a scowl, and his hands hanging listlessly over his knees; while Grace turned her spinning-wheel or plied her needle. She used to try all her powers of conversation to amuse her husband, until she felt, in all its bitterness,

the sentiment expressed by the French woman, whose irksome task it was to amuse a man, and a king too—that he was no longer amusable.

"If it wouldn't tire you, Jim dear," said Grace one evening, when she exhausted all her powers of amusing him, and found the effort vain, "may be you'd read aloud to me, as you used to do oncet;" and a sigh unconsciously followed the observation.

"Sure, so I would, Grace," replied Jim, "but the devil a newspaper have I; and as for rading the ould books we've read over so often, sure it tires me, and does me no good."

"Well, I won't ax you, Jim, if you don't like it; but sure it is not half so tiresome as to be sitting doing nothing at all, with the hands idle and the thoughts busy with vexing subjects. Nothing is such a comfort, when one has vexing thoughts, as to keep the hands active, and to try and turn the poor troubled mind to something else. When I feel unaisy, as often I have done of late, God help me! I open the Bible which Miss Desmond (that was) gave me, and when I read of the troubles that others have had, and think that we are all born to 'trouble as the sparks fly upwards,' it seems to me that I forget my own cares in pitying those I read of, though they have found rest long and long ago."

"I'd like to know what the Sogarth* would say to you," said Jim, "if he knew that you were reading a Protestant Bible; sure I see that Miss Desmond, or Mrs. Forrester as I ought to call her, wants to convart you by giving you such a book. It's very well for her that is a great lady, and has got her heaven upon *this earth*, as all them rich tyrants have, to forget that there's another heaven that by rights is kept for us who never enjoy this life, having to toil, and moil, and work, while they have all the fruit of our labour. But we must think of the heaven in the world to come, which we surely won't get a place in, if we don't mind what the Sogarth tells us, and he certainly warned us not to read the Bible."

"Och! Jim, can you with your fine heart bear to think that, bekase people are rich in this world, they cannot, will not enjoy heaven if they deserve it? Could you bear to think, that the dear, good ould masther and mistress, and Miss Desmond, Mrs. Forrester I mane, and her husband too, won't be all in heaven, and that we won't have the comfort, and a great one it will surely be, of seeing them there?"

"I mane to say, what the Priest tells me, that no one out of our own Roman Catholic religion will be saved; and as for the rich, sure the priest himself tould us all, and said he took it of the Bible, that it was easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

"If it's a sin to read the Bible, why then does the priest read it?" asked Grace, with all a woman's quickness, "and sure, if he tould you that passage, he ought to tell you also, that it manes that rich people are tried with so many more temptations than the poor, in the way of having the power of indulging all their fancies, that as it is more difficult for them, so have they more merit for being good, and desarving heaven, than the poor have."

"But what have you to say, Grace, against what the Sogarth tould us all? Says he, 'Sure them that live in fine houses, sitting on gold chairs covered with silks, and the very walls covered with silks and satins, and pictures that oftentimes isn't dacent; walking on carpets that's smoother than the finest meadow in the month of May; ating the richest of meats off silver, and dhrinking the brightest of wines out of glasses that's as clear as the dew on the leaves and herbs in the morning; lying on beds as soft as the down of the thistle, and on sheets white as the dhriven snow, curtains falling around 'em of the richest colors, and not letting a breath of could air blow on 'em; and when they're tired of ating and dhrinking, and riding, and dhriving, with horses that look as if they, too, were come of noble fathers and mothers, they can hear music that goes to the very heart and can make one jump for joy, or sit down and think of all them that's gone till the tears come into the eyes; they can then lie down on their soft beds, sure and certain that the morning will bring 'em back the same grandeur and pleasures they had the day before; and sure their sleep must be pleasanter than a poor man's; and what elegant drames they must have going to their soft beds, with their stomachs full of such fine food of every kind. And then,' says the priest, 'would it be just or natural, that them that have such a heaven upon earth should have a heaven in the other world? Sure 'twould be a crying shame if they had.'"

"Och! Jim honey," said Grace, "what

* Priest.

a false picture the priest drew! Sure it's a sin and wickedness to put envy and jealousy into the minds of the poor against the rich, by making 'em believe what's not true. The grand people are so used to the fine gold chairs, and walls covered with silks and smooth carpets, that they don't remark 'em as we would do; they are always before their eyes, and give 'em no pleasure; and it's only in case they were taken from 'em that they'd begin to think about 'em. The grand dinners they are mostly tired of; and sure enough the housekeeper at Springmount has tould me that the great people took more pleasure in plain, common things to eat, on account of the novelty, than in all them rich savory dishes they have before 'em every day. Then, as they don't work hard like us, they are seldom hungry, and they force their appetites by unwholesome things, which often makes 'em sick and sorrowful too, for you'll see ten, ay twenty, grand, idle gentlefolks ill, for one hard-working man or woman, which ought to reconcile us to work. That bright wine too, which looks like damask roses, and clove carnation turned into liquor, does 'em more harm than good; and when they lie down on them soft beds, with their poor stomachs too often overloaded, or else that what they eat is too rich, many an hour they lie tumbling and tossing, more unaisy than the poorest laborer on his bed of straw, and throubled with night-mares and dhreams that seldom come near the poor man's bed. The rich have a thousand vexations that we have not, ay Jim, the very best of 'em have their throubles; and as they are brought up with every thing so grand about 'em, they get into a way of believing every thing ought to happen as they like, and therefore their disappointments hurts 'em more than ours do us; indeed, they feel things more keenly, and take many things to heart that we wouldn't understand at all. So you see that those, if they have more pleasures, have also more pains than us, for God makes every thing equal. The rich have to think of us and for us: we depend on them, and sure a heavy burden we must be to their minds, thinking what they can best do to make us aisy and comfortable. All the pleasures the rich and great have too, Jim dear, that seems so delightful to us, isn't so to them, for they're too well used to 'em to take much enjoyment in 'em, but their cares and throubles fall harder on 'em than on us, who are too well hardened in minds and bodies to fret as they do. Then, if grief comes to us, we haven't time to give ourselves up to it; we're obliged to work and be active, and that dhrives it away from us by day; and the hard labor, by tiring us, makes us sleep sound by night, so that we get over it the sooner. But the rich, who have nothing to do but to think, brood over their grief; and sure it's a sorrowful sight to see weeping and wailing in grand rooms, with every thing around as if they were made only for rejoicing. The very grandeur makes the person grieve more; for, if he has lost some one he loved that shared it all, it reminds him more and more of the loss; and it's a mournful thought to look around on all the beautiful things about, and to think of the dark, gloomy, vault where those he is grieving for is lying; for, though them that's gone can't see or feel how dismal the vault they're resting in is, or what a difference there is between it and the fine houses they have left, them that's left behind often thinks of it, and the comparison adds to their throuble."

"Why faith, Grace, you'd thry to persuade a body that the poor is happier than the rich; but you won't get many to believe you. Maybe you'd be for telling us that the masther isn't happier than I am?"

"Sure, Jim dear, it's myself that has no raison to be proud any way, when you, my husband, who I pass my life in thrying to make happy, thinks a poor ould gentleman, a rich, and a grand, and rael gentleman he is to be sure, happier than you, a fine comely, hearty, healthy boy, with a loving wife, and wanting nothing but the spirit of contentment, which may God give you!"

"Why, what does the ould masther want, Grace? Hasn't he oceans of gold and the whole side of a counthry belonging to him? Hasn't he a good wife, though she is a Sassenach, and a fine beautiful daughter? What more would he want?"

"Do you forget, Jim, that he lost his son and heir, and never had a second? Isn't this a terrible grief to a father's heart, when he had, as you say, oceans of gold, and the whole side of the counthry to give him, and an ould grand name, respected all round Ireland? Sure, the more he had to leave his son and heir, the more heavy must be the loss to him. When a poor man loses his child, though he grieves truly, he hasn't so many different vexatious thoughts to make it worse as the rich man has; and he thinks, 'Well, he's gone to a better place, and is at rest from all labor for evermore!' If he is hard-worked himself, he thinks his child that's gone to hea-

ven is saved a life of toil and privation, and this comforts him. Now, though the dear ould masther has the best daughter in all Ireland, still it is not like having a fine grand gentleman to stand in his father's shoes, and keep up the name of Desmond. Then the masther has passed all his long life in doing good to all about him, and now that he's an ould man, isn't it a bitter sight for him to see the whole counthry forgetting his goodness, and, like ungrateful, unnatural children, turning against their own father, for such he ever has been to us all, and instead of listening to his good advice, and following it, to know that they think of nothing on earth but mischief and repaling? Och! Jim, sorry am I to say that the dear ould masther is *not* happy, and more shame to them that puts a thorn in his side; for what goes to the heart like ingratitude from those we've been liking and serving all our days, as he has been sarving all the whole counthry?"

"Why, Grace, you talk as if I didn't love the ould masther and the family, when it's you that's mistaken, for I do."

"I know you ought, Jim dear, and I hope you do; but it's a quare way you take to show it, by going quite contrary to his advice, when you and all your blood that came before you, has had years and years of good actions, and noble actions from the masther, to prove he is your best and only thrue friend."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

"It is a busy talking world,
That with licentious breath blows like the wind
As freely on the palace as the cottage."

"Slander meets no regard from noble minds;
Only the base believe what the base utter."

So unconscious was Lady Oriel of any cause for a change in the manner of her friends and acquaintance, that she did not observe it; but it was not lost on her husband, who, sensitively alive to even the shadow of disrespect, was wounded to the quick by it, and mentally blamed her severely for having given birth to such impertinence, as also still more bitterly for not perceiving to what she had exposed herself. Some ladies, who were barely tolerated in society, and whose conduct scarcely merited toleration—if the cold reception they experienced in the few houses to which they had the *entrée* could be so called—might now be seen to approach Lady Oriel with a confidence and ease very different to the embarrassed and humbled air with which they formerly tried to catch her eye or court her notice.

Each day found Lord Oriel still more cold and repulsive, and his wife now almost dreaded a *tête-à-tête* with him. Lord Delmore, as he became better acquainted with Lady Oriel, began to question the success of which, at the commencement of his attentions, he entertained no doubt. The more he saw of her, the more he became convinced of the purity of her mind, and that he owed the favor with which he was treated, to her perfect freedom from suspicion that any meaner feeling than friendship urged the attentions which, he now believed, would be spurned with contempt, if their real motive were avowed.

How many women's reputations have been for ever compromised by a belief in the *friendship* of men!—a sentiment that no woman excites in the breast of man, until she has lost the charms that gave birth to other and more passionate ones.

The vanity of Lord Delmore—that craving passion that sleeps not while aught is left to animate it—now became alarmed. He counted the few weeks of the season still remaining ere the close of the session would release the members from their parliamentary duties, and send them from London for many months. In proportion to his doubts of triumphing over the principles of Lady Oriel, became his anxiety *d'afficher* his attentions, and to compromise her reputation; and with the unthinking sentimentality of most of her sex, she attributed this change of manner to his excited feelings at the prospect of their approaching separation; and repaid it with increased kindness.

In the unsuspecting purity of her heart, how often did she lament that Lord Oriel partook not of her friendly feelings for Lord Delmore; nay, she blamed the former as being cold and prejudiced, in withholding his approbation from one so apparently deserving it, and regretted this omission the more, as it precluded her extending to him the invitation that included a large circle of fashion at Oriel Park for the autumn. She had given various hints on the subject to Lord Oriel, but they had been received with such marked coldness, that she had not courage to persevere.

At the commencement of the season, Lady Oriel had been continually asked to *chaperon* a daughter, sister, or niece, by friends who were as remarkable for the strictness of their principles and decorum,

as for their elevated positions in society. Lord Oriel had felt flattered that his young and lovely wife was selected to fill this confidential situation. When forced by his parliamentary duties to be absent from her, he dwelt with complacency on her being attended by one or two young female friends, and remarked with pleasure, how well satisfied the young ladies appeared with the manner in which Lady Oriel discharged the duties of a chaperon.

But by degrees the demands on her to fulfil this service fell off, and at length totally ceased; while she, unconscious of any cause for it, commented in the presence of her husband on the unaccountable estrangement of her friends, and on their confiding to others, the trust they had so often besought her to fill.

The morbid sensitiveness of Lord Oriel took fresh alarm at what he conceived to be indications of his wife's decreased estimation in the opinion of the scrupulous ladies in question, as also proof that she had ceased to merit the same respect as formerly; hence his manner became more cold and austere than ever, and checked every approach to confidential intercourse on the part of his wife.

Lord Delmore noted all these changes, and noted them with pleasure; for who is so egotistical and unfeeling as the heartless betrayer, who beholds the entanglement of her whom he would make his victim in the snares he has set for her, with the sensations of the spider watching some hapless fly hopelessly writhing in the meshes of its web? He had tried repeatedly, but tried in vain, to induce Lady Oriel to open her feelings to him on the subject of her discontent with Lord Oriel. Hints, innuendoes, all were tried; parallel cases were described by him, the wives pitied, and the husbands decried as unworthy of such amiable victims; but still, with the instinctive delicacy of affection, Lady Oriel shrank from exposing the dissatisfaction it was but too evident she felt; for though disappointed in her husband, she yet loved him too well to confess to any living creature that she considered herself aggrieved by him.

This was perhaps the only prudence that now marked her conduct; for, though the thought of guilt was still a stranger to her mind, scandal and slander were busy with her fame; and, like many of her sex, she furnished an example that honor and fame are not synonymous, and that personal purity may be preserved when reputation, one of its best guardians, has been lost.

One of the most difficult lessons to impress on the minds of women is, the defencelessness of fame unless prudence guards the outposts; and, alas! this lesson is often only acquired by the loss of that which prudence alone can preserve; and she who has not violated the laws of virtue finds herself condemned as a criminal for having been only remiss in appearances, and has to weep over a blighted name, while the heart is still untainted.

Lady Oriel had a feminine fondness for flowers; and few days passed in which she did not drive to some florist's to select plants for her conservatory or a fresh bouquet for the evening. Lord Delmore knew all her haunts; and, without any thing like an assignation, from which, notwithstanding their friendship, she would have held back, he generally contrived to meet her on the road, or near the florist's, and to give her his arm while walking through the nursery-grounds or hot-houses in search of flowers. On such occasions, they had frequently encountered many of her female acquaintances, whose coldness of manner and evident avoidance of them were too visible not to be remarked.

Lady Oriel's pride prevented her from commenting on this change to Lord Delmore; but he failed not to draw her attention to it, by declaiming against the envy and jealousy of her sex, which induced them to show coldness to those whose beauty and powers of pleasing left their inferior attractions immeasurably behind. He thus instilled into her unsuspicious mind the injurious belief that beauty and talent can hope for no friends among her sex; and each new instance of coldness from her former friends was considered as an irrefragable proof of the truth of this dangerous doctrine.

Lord Delmore's saddle-horses or cabriolet were to be seen drawn up near Lady Oriel's vacant carriage at the doors of all the nursery-grounds she frequented, or the exhibitions or galleries she visited; and the significant smiles and sly looks exchanged by their fashionable acquaintances, nay, even by the servants, had she seen them, would have for ever humiliated the pride and delicacy of her whose unthinking imprudence, in allowing such a marked display of attentions, gave rise to them.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

"Man is an embodied paradox, a bundle of contradictions; and, as some set-off against the marvellous things that he has done, we might fairly adduce the monstrous things that he has believed. The more gross the fraud, the more glibly will it go down, and the more greedily will it be swallowed, since folly will always find faith where imposters will find impudence."

"Let me implore you, Jim dear," said Grace, "to go no more to the meetings of the Repalers. It's my prayer to you, and it's the advice of the masther."

"Indeed then, Grace, I don't see what right the masther has to be giving me his advice, just for all the world as if I was his slave, instead of being his tenant."

"But tell me, Jim dear, when you won't take the advice of a friend that has been so many years thried as the good masther, how come you to go headlong, as if you were blindfolded, at the bidding of the Repalers?"

"Why, Grace, didn't they tell me how bamboozled we all are? and didn't they prove it, as clear as mud, that all landlords are tyrants, and all of us slaves? They didn't, to be sure, say that the ould masther in particular was a tyrant; but, as they said, all landlords were; and sure as the masther is a landlord, he must be a tyrant, and it's our duty not to follow his bidding."

"Well, Jim, a cuishlamachree, only wait, and if ever those same Repalers that's crying out against landlords now, come to pick up their crumbs, and to have broad lands of their own, with tenants and dependants belonging to 'em, you'll see how they'll alter. If I was to see the great estated gentlemen, who have large fortunes to lose, advising the poor ignorant people to agitate and make disturbance, I might think it worth while to listen to them, from knowing that if the poor ould counthry was ruint they would suffer the most, and it would make me think they loved freedom, as they call it, better than their great fortunes; and when that's the case, there's something mighty grand in it—something that makes my heart swell and a could tremor run up to the roots of my hair, which always happens to me when I hear of any one doing what is grand and noble. But when I know it's only a few gentlemen, followed by a pack of buckeens and spalpeens, who have more wind in their lungs than guineas in their purses, and have no fortunes to lose even if they ruin the poor ould counthry, sure then I think to myself, if these gentry didn't do something to make a disturbance and get themselves talked of, who'd ever hear they were in the world at all at all? and one way or other they must gain by their mischief, and have nothing to lose.

"If the Lord Leftenant takes 'em up, to stop their mischief," pursued Grace, "then they cry out they are parsecuted; and well they know that even if the worst men are parsecuted, it makes all the people stand up for 'em, and this gives 'em more power. If the Lord Leftenant lets them alone to go on with all their disturbance, then they say he is afraid of 'em, or wanting to make it up with 'em; so whichever way that poor English lord acts, they'll find a plan to decaive him. Then you see, Jim, that while they're disturbing the counthry, they get all they can out of the poor people; and if they are brought up by the Lord Leftenant, they make a good bargain too; so *they* are sure to gain, while *we* are as certain of losing, and this is what none of ye will open your eyes to see. Now as the Repalers have got used to be followed by mobs, and to be always talked of and made a fuss about, they'll never like to sit down quiet and aisy again as long as they live; so I see no chance of our ever having this poor ould, throubled counthry happy, unless some plain, honest-spoken people would take the pains to show the poor people what fools and tools they're made of to sarve the interests of a few men who are puffed up by ambition, and who would give up the counthry clear and clane to sarve their own ends.

"Well, Jim honey, little I ever thought that I'd be turning my thoughts to such matthers; nor would I, if I didn't see the madness of the poor good-hearted fools about me; and above all, Jim, if I didn't see you ready to believe the rhaumeish of the Repalers against the proofs before your own eyes.—Will you tell me, Jim, oncet for all, what is a tyrant?"

"Sure, Grace, a tyrant is a great budoch, who makes his tenants pay their rints to him, and thries to prevent 'em attending 'sociations, and is always for forcing his advice on 'em whether they like it or no."

"Och, Jim, if that's all that a tyrant is, I don't think any one need mind being called a tyrant; faith, myself thought it was something terrible, and was quite vexed at hearing the dear ould masther called so, but now I see it means no harm. Was it the Repalers that tould you this maning of the word, Jim?"

No, Grace, it was myself; for this is all I ever saw our landlord do, and they call him tyrant, sure this must be the maning."

"Jim a-vourneen, isn't it a terrible thing that words, turned and twisted against the right maning, should have power to unsettle the raison of them that have more hearts in their bodies than brains in their heads. 'Tis only necessary for the Repalers to come down on your ears with a few high-sounding wicked names, and ye are all on fire, never stopping to inquire if those to whom they give such names deserve 'em. Does not all the world think that a *tyrant* is the strongest term of reproach that can be given to any man in power? and doesn't even the feelings of a woman rise up in anger against it? And when the Repalers use it against those that Providence has placed over ye, are ye not worked up to madness and ready to commit any crime against 'em? But then, when in cold blood ye reflect on all ye know of your landlords, and can't find any act of cruelty or wickedness, ye then begin to think that the word itself can't be so bad as ye thought, merely bekase ye don't find the badness in those to whom those bad names are tacked. Jim dear, you think that I'm tame, and too quiet to bear up with courage against bad usage; you think that I'd be afraid of a rael tyrant, if I had the misfortune to meet with one. But you're mistaken; for, weak and feeble as I am, not all the tyrants on the earth could make me do what was against my own sense of honesty and principle; and I'd submit with all the courage and patience I could, to support whatever punishment they might heap on me, so as that I had the comfort of thinking I was doing what I believed was right in the sight of God, and that my conscience was satisfied."

"Faith, Grace, the difference between you and me is, that the right notions or principles, as you call 'em, is wrote down in large letters with black ink in your mind, and can't be rubbed out, but they're only slightly marked with a pencil in mine, and the least thing takes 'em away, more's the pity, and the sin too for me to be so wake. But you see asthore, no passions but gentle loving ones come into your head, to rub against your principles, though I believe even if they did you would resist; but many strong and evil passions come into mine, and my principles melt away before 'em like butter before a fire, or a lump of ice in a warm hand. Besides, Grace, you never yet heard the greatest of the Repalers spake; sure, if you did, it would make a difference. When that man stands up, and his wide chest seems to grow wider and wider, and as he spakes he grows taller and taller, and the strong firm voice of him sends out the big words in a manner so earnest, that one is plaised with the very sound, without examining the sense, (though sure there can't be a want of sense in words that moves and maddens hundreds, ay, and thousands) you'd be moved yourself, Grace a-vourneen, like me, and feel ready to do all he told you."

"Maybe I would, Jim, for I own that there is something very grand in hearing big thoughts, which sure is a gift from God, coming from the mind in big words that matches 'em; and if the great Repaler turned the big thoughts and the big words to stamp notions of honesty, dacency, and respect for the laws, on the minds of those whom he can so easily move, I'd look on him as one that ought to be approached with reverence, as using the gift of God for the benefit of his fellow creatures. But at present I look on him as I would on a mountain stream, swollen by rains, rushing down and overpowering all that it meets in its passage, bekase its force is too much increased to allow it to keep in its own place. Instead of doing good, it destroys; and though grand, its grandeur is awful and alarming, and more to be feared than admired."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Oh, God! my wife,
The nearest dearest part of all man's honor,
Left a base slur to pass from mouth to mouth
Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul comments,
And villanous jests, and blasphemies obscene;
While sneering nobles, in more polish'd guise,
Whisper'd the tale, and smiled upon the lie."

Lady Oriel, with that infatuation which often accompanies a consciousness of talents, was the more easily led to believe the assertions of her artful admirer, that the coldness of her female friends proceeded from envy and jealousy, excited by her superior attractions. This belief led her to assume a *fierté* of manner towards them, which increased their animadversions on her conduct. They might have overlooked much greater levity in a woman who sought to disarm their criticisms by courting their society; but, seeing her assume a still higher tone, which she did

from a consciousness of her own innocence, and what she considered their inferiority, (proved as she imagined by their mean jealousy and envy,) they became still more vehement in their censures, and less charitable in their conclusions.

Her select receptions on Wednesdays, hitherto the very focus of fashion, into which all its rays were merged, now became "fine by degrees, and beautifully less," until the society was reduced to so limited a number, that it seldom amounted to more than seven or eight persons; of which five were males, and not the *élite* of her former circle, but the tolerated portion of it. Lord Oriel looked in occasionally on such evenings, and his face assumed a paler hue, and his glance more severity, when, having passed through the splendid suite of illuminated rooms, he found his lovely wife with her small, but no longer select circle, of which Lord Delmore appeared the hero, being so far superior to the other men present, that he could not fail to appear to great advantage by the contrast.

The love of crowds is one of the besetting sins of the English of all ranks; and this was never more clearly proved than in the case of Lady Oriel. Three parts of her guests came to her house to meet the fourth, and now stayed away because there was no longer a host—

"Mocking the desert they themselves had made."

The few who attended, talked of some former satellite of Lady Oriel who had now chosen *her* Wednesdays; the new aspirant building her chance of becoming a leader of *haut ton* on the ruins of the temple of the deity hitherto so worshipped: and the fallen goddess discovered with a pang, that all her consciousness of superiority could not assuage the vexation she experienced in hearing the names of some of the most brilliant of "those her former bounty fed," as among the deserters to the camp of the enemy.

It had been settled, before the attentions of Lord Delmore became conspicuous, that two young ladies, one the daughter of the Duchess of Derwent, and the other the heiress of the house of Heaviland, were to leave London with Lady Oriel, and remain with her for two months. Cold apologies stating a change of places, came from the mothers of both; and two of the most distinguished of the invited male visitors, on discovering this defection, made their excuses.

It was about this period that Lord Oriel, having returned from the House of Lords one night, and having looked into the drawing-rooms, retired by a private stair-case to his library to write some letters; and while thus occupied, was disturbed by the sounds of angry voices in the vestibule. He was on the point of ringing to inquire the cause of the clamor, when the names of Lady Oriel and Lord Delmore being repeated with vehemence, he recognised the voice of an Irish footman, whose violence of temper had been made known to him on a former occasion, but whose promises of amendment had induced the *maitre-d'hotel* to intercede for his pardon. With the exuberance of language peculiar to his excitable countrymen, now increased by ebriety, he proclaimed aloud his disbelief of the aspersions cast on the honor of his lady by the footman of Lord Delmore. He defied him to single combat, and in the true spirit of vulgar recrimination, accused Lord Delmore of being a wily deceiver, who came into happy families to disturb their peace.

In vain the footman of Lord Delmore, trembling with fear of punishment, apologised, explained, and urged the Hibernian to silence. The irascible champion—though commanded to retire by the *maitre-d'hotel*—aided in the support of his official duties by the groom of the chambers and butler—continued to vociferate invectives against Lord Delmore, mingled with vulgar and humiliating defences for his Lady, until he was dragged from the vestibule by the other servants, lest the noise should be heard in the drawing-rooms; where they supposed their Lord as well as Lady to be.

As the most clear and sparkling water cannot pass through an impure vessel without being sullied, so the reputation of a woman cannot be made the subject of menial conversation without losing its original purity. Vulgar and uneducated minds are incapable of judging their superiors. The fine gradations, and almost imperceptible lines of demarcation, between apparent error and actual guilt, are altogether invisible to them. A sympathy of habits and feelings renders persons of equal station capable of appreciating motives and drawing conclusions from circumstances which the coarse-minded and ignorant cannot comprehend; who, judging from self, the only criterion known to them, hesitate not to attribute guilt where indiscretion alone exists. The utmost malice of the refined never extended to one-half the length in its conclusions, to which servants, without any malice, continually go

in theirs; and many a high-born and innocent woman has been by her domestics believed capable of actions, the bare suspicion of which would have filled her with dismay and horror. But they had deduced their opinions wholly from the laxity of their own moral feelings, without any malice towards her.

Little did the noble-minded, delicate Lady Oriel imagine, that the indiscreet intimacy which she had allowed to subsist between herself and Lord Delmore, had become for weeks the subject of a thousand gross pleasantries, hints, and innuendoes, among the lower servants in their respective establishments. Her name had become familiar in their rude mouths, her husband's a jest, and her supposed lover was considered by them as a monstrous clever fellow, who knew what he was about. The upper servants, more reserved, though equally suspicious, expressed not what they thought; but, contented themselves with narrowly observing and internally commenting on all that they observed, wondering at the courage of their lady, who took no pains to conceal the intimacy, as though she had never attached any idea of impropriety to it. But the cordiality of her *accueil* to Lord Delmore, and the frequency of his visits, confirmed them in the most erroneous and injurious conclusions; while she, unsuspecting and pure-minded, dreamed not of the dishonorable and odious light in which she was viewed by them.

What the feelings of Lord Oriel were, on hearing the degrading defence, and the accusations that led to it, is more easily imagined than described. He became for a few minutes transfixed, as it were, to the spot; a tremor shook his limbs; and anger, pride, and deeply-wounded delicacy, strove for mastery in his breast. A few moments' reflection induced him to steal softly from the library; having previously arranged the papers on the table, and extinguished the light, so as not to have it imagined that he had been there. He ascended his private staircase with noiseless step, and it was a relief to him to hear the sounds of music proceeding from the drawing-room, though they ill accorded with his present feelings, as it convinced him that the clamor in the vestibule had not been heard in the salons. He turned from the sounds, and sought the privacy of his dressing-room, to brood over the "food for meditation even to madness," which the scene he had overheard had engendered.

Bitter were the pangs that shot through his heart, when he thought of his beautiful and worshipped Louisa as the subject of the comments and calumnies of servants. How did she appear shorn of her beams, and her purity blotted by what he had heard! The stain on his own personal honor—and few could be so sensitively alive to such a stain as was this high-born and high-bred aristocrat—seemed even less shocking to him than the degradation of her he so loved and honored. Anger rose to repel the blow aimed at *his* respectability; but tears, of almost feminine softness, wept the insult that was heaped on her he would have died to shield, even from a glance of disrespect; and whose fair fame, now blurred over by the tongues of vile menials, he could not vindicate or avenge. How did he wish, with the passionate affliction of a high mind unaccustomed to give way to violence, that the accuser and defender of his wife were of a rank which could enable him to meet them in the field, where their lives should atone for their accursed profanation, or his own death release him from the agony it had entailed upon him!

At one moment, he thought of opening the eyes of his wife, as he felt the absolute necessity of at once putting an end to her acquaintance with Lord Delmore; but the next found him shrinking with disgust at the idea of her humiliation at the disclosure, and the dread that, with her keen sense of pride, this humiliation would chase away for ever all softer and warmer feelings towards him. Lord Oriel never for a moment doubted the actual innocence of his wife; but he had often, and sorely, felt her want of *retenue* in her *liaison* with Lord Delmore, and the impropriety of a married woman forming any friendships with men, of which her husband was not the collecting link or medium.

With an agitated mind and feverish body, he acknowledged the impossibility of encountering Lady Oriel until he had come to some final decision. His ideas were in a chaos; he seized his pen to write to her, but threw it away in despair at the first few incoherent words it traced. Never had he written to her before except with a heart overflowing with love and affection. But now—what a change! A thousand bitter, but tender emotions overwhelmed him as he looked back on the past. The lovely and trusting bride, who had preferred him to all others, was present to his imagination; the charms of in-

fancy in her person scarcely rivalled by those of womanhood; and then "the wife still dearer than the bride," the fond, the happy, confiding partner of his happiest days, stood before him in all her beauty. The present, the fearful present, was for a few minutes forgotten in the past.

But soon came back the bitter recollection, and with it the reproachful question, how had he fulfilled his duties to the lovely object confided to his care? Had he warned her before danger found her? or had he shielded or advised her when it had? Alas! no; he owned with mortal anguish that he left her in the path of danger; from which, though she might escape with an unsullied person, she could not bear away an unspotted reputation.

All this his guilty neglect now struck him with keen self-reproach; but such was the devotedness of his love, that it was a relief to him to accumulate blame on himself, that a less portion might fall on her; and he felt that she had more right to upbraid *him* than he had to censure *her*.

Let no one say that true affection is egotistical, because a few pretenders to love are selfish. No; egotism proves at once the absence of love.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

"The flying rumors gather'd as they roll'd;
Scarce any tale was sooner heard or told;
And all who told it added something new,
And all who heard it made enlargement too;
In every ear it spread, on every tongue it grew."

Lord Oriel passed the night in feverish slumbers, reclining in a bergère; and was awakened by the shrill tones of Mademoiselle La Tour, the *femme de chambre* of his wife, who was in the dressing-room of her mistress, with which his room communicated. La Tour, between occasional sobs and angry tirades against Monsieur Henri, *le valet de pied de Milord Delmore*, and with the *brusquerie* and want of tact that is a distinguishing characteristic in her countrywomen of that class, when once their anger is excited, stated, that, *certainement ce vilain Henri* did say to Monsieur Jacques, *le valet de pied de Miladi, que Milord Delmore est l'amant de Miladi. Imaginez vous, miladi, quelle horreur! et malgré que je n'en crois rien, c'est toujours bien désagréable pour nous tous*," including, with a true French feeling of equality, herself with her lady in the *Nous tous*.

Her volubility met with no check, until a slight noise, and an exclamation of "*Ah, mon Dieu! elle se trouve mal!*" made Lord Oriel forget all but that the person dearest to him on earth was suffering. He rushed into the room, and found Lady Oriel extended on her *chaise longue*, and to all appearance dead. Her face had all the rigidity and snowy whiteness of marble; her dark eye-lashes, resting on those pale cheeks, gave them a still more death-like aspect; her raven hair fell in wild disorder over her figure, rendering it more touching; and the total prostration of moral and physical force which her whole appearance betrayed showed the violence of the shock that had subdued her.

To bathe her temples, to apply pungent odors to her nostrils, and to chafe her icy hands within his own, were the work of a moment; but it was many minutes ere returning animation repaid the anxious and agitated husband's cares. During which time, with the usual bustling helplessness of those of her country and station, La Tour wept, scolded, and bemoaned her destiny; by turns recommending *un peu d'eau de Cologne sur de sucre—une goutte de fleur d'orange dans l'eau—une tasse de tilleul, avec une cuillerée de syrup de violettes;* and, having exhausted her catalogue of a French-woman's remedies in all similar cases, without Lord Oriel's showing any desire of trying their efficacy, she murmured to herself, taking care that it should not be loud enough to be heard by him, "*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! comme ces Anglais sont betes et entetes!*"

A slight tinge of rose on the pale cheeks, and a deep sigh, marked Lady Oriel's return to life and consciousness. She opened her languid eyes, and seeing her husband tenderly occupied about her, closed them with a shudder that threatened a renewal of the attack. He addressed her by the fondest terms of endearment; disguising all his own misery in the hope of alleviating what he knew she must feel. Having dismissed La Tour, who unwillingly and sulkily departed, he succeeded in restoring Lady Oriel to something like a state of calmness; though the wild glance that first shrank from his when she opened her eyes, was now exchanged for the expression of mute, hopeless, and fixed despair. She suffered his attentions with an air of deep humility, as though she felt she was no longer worthy of them; and his manly heart bled for her, when he witnessed the mental anguish that was expressed in every look.

Lady Oriel believed that her husband

was still ignorant of the cause of her sudden indisposition; and the tenderness of his manner, so unlike the cold constraint that had marked it for the last few months, awakened the deep love that had lately slumbered in her breast, but which had only slumbered to awaken with renewed force. But at what a moment did it awaken! Her indiscretion had brought dishonor on his name, had been the cause of the alienation of friends, the coldness of acquaintances! All—all was now revealed to her; and she was dismayed when the fearful reality of her position was exposed to the scrutiny of her alarmed, too lately alarmed, sensitiveness.

How did this favorite of fortune, blessed with all that can render life desirable, now wish that the grave should hide her repentance and her shame!—Alas! we seldom think of death, until life is embittered by our errors, and when we are least fit to encounter it! Lady Oriel dared not contemplate the probable results of her conduct, and yet she dreaded the results less than she execrated the cause; for she now saw the unthinking folly of her perseverance in permitting attentions which the coldness of her husband's manner had proved that he condemned.

Lord Oriel's delicacy and forbearance now presented themselves to her in brilliant colors, and in proportion to her admiration of them became her self-condemnation. Pride, that arch enemy, which avenges itself unmercifully when we err, yet cannot preserve us from erring, was up in arms in her breast, to oppose the flood of tenderness and deep sense of humiliation which threatened to overpower it. At one moment, she thought of proposing to Lord Oriel to retire to the country, to the continent, any where, to escape from the scene of her present degradation; hoping that he might be kept in ignorance of the reports to her disadvantage, for that such reports were in general circulation, she no longer allowed herself to doubt. The next moment, she determined to avow all to Lord Oriel, to throw herself on his tenderness and mercy, and to pass the rest of her life in endeavoring to atone for her faults.

She requested Lord Oriel to leave her to a few hours' repose; though of even this temporary blessing, she felt she had at the present crisis but little hope. When consigned to the solitude of her chamber, she communed with her own heart; and while tears of contrition and despair fell over her paper, she communicated to him the result of her reflections, in the following letter:—

"How shall I address you, most beloved and most injured of men? how find courage to tell you, that my levity and fatal indiscretion have brought blight and dishonorable suspicion on your name? that name never before sullied by the searching breath of scandal—that noble name which you gave to me with confidence, and in which I gloried! You—you alone, understand me, and can believe that, though exposed to suspicion, I am incapable of guilt. Think of the bitterness of heart with which I avow this, and knowing that in public opinion I am dishonored, I still live, and live to wound your peace with this fatal avowal. Friends have fallen off from me; acquaintances have deserted me; and you, too, whom I have so cruelly ininjured—your kindness and forbearance rises up in judgment to add to the misery I feel, when I reflect that I have brought your spotless name even to be the topic of your own menials.

"Why, oh! why did a false pride prevent me from seeking the cause of the coldness that has for the last few months marked your manner towards me? All would have then been explained, and this wretchedness would have been spared me. But no; I shut my eyes to the danger that menaced me, and, never dreaming of crime, disgrace has overtaken me. My own dishonor I might bear, supported by the consciousness of innocence; but to draw shame on you! no—that I cannot bear and live. We must separate, though despair is in the thought; but never shall it be said that you were the dupe of her whom you so loved and trusted. My innocence can never be made manifest to the world; and while it is doubted—nay, more than doubted—can I suffer you to be pointed at by the finger of scorn for sheltering one who has, in losing her good name, forfeited all right to such a boon? I will retire to some solitary place, where a life of the most circumspect prudence shall at least preclude the possibility of future scandal, though it cannot atone for past indiscretion.—Try to forget and pardon me.

"Little did I think, a short time ago, that I should ever have to ask you to do either!—But let me not dwell on the past, or how shall I bear the present? I dare no longer give expression to an affection that must appear suspicious, if not worthless, when it could not preserve her who

professes it from the cruel necessity of signing herself

"Your unworthy wife,

"LOUISA ORIEL."

Various and agitated were the feelings and thoughts which passed through the mind of Lord Oriel during the hours of seclusion which succeeded his departure from his wife's dressing-room. He never for a moment contemplated the idea of a separation from her; though the vulnerable part of his character, extreme pride, was painfully wounded by his anticipations of all that would be said and thought of his continuing to live with a wife whose reputation was so tarnished.

But love, at length, triumphed over every other feeling in Lord Oriel's heart, and he awaited with fear and trembling the next interview with his wife; on which he felt hung the peace of his future life, because on her conduct on this trying occasion depended his esteem.

"Now," thought Lord Oriel, "is the crisis of my fate. If she, believing that I am ignorant of it, conceals her position, how can I esteem her again? and yet, so naturally proud is her spirit, if she humiliate herself too deeply, may I not lose her affection in her own too vivid consciousness of her self-abasement?"

Her letter was brought to him while all these reflections were passing in his mind; and in the various sentiments of love, admiration and pity every line of it excited, he forgot all, but the certainty it conveyed that her attachment was undiminished and the purity of her mind unimpaired. The opinion of the world faded away before the tenderness with which his heart overflowed; and when he sought Lady Oriel, the timidity of a lover was more evident in his manner, than the forgiveness of a husband. His arguments and reasoning were too flattering to her love and pride to be resisted. She felt that a separation from him would steep her future years in misery; but she shrank in dismay at the thought, that when the excitement of the moment was over, he might quail before the strictures of the clique, whose fiats had hitherto had so much influence on his mind, and regret the sacrifice to affection that he was now making.

Dearly has that woman expiated her errors, when she feels that the protection a husband affords her, may subject him to the contumely of the world! This dread was rooted in the sensitive heart of Lady Oriel, never again to depart; but it lent new charms to her manner towards him; and the gentleness, the beseeching love that each look and action displayed, originating in the self-reproach and humiliation which preyed on her health and peace, only rendered her, both mentally and personally, more exquisitely interesting.

Mingled tears, mutual self-reproaches, and renewed fondness, marked the reconciliation of Lord and Lady Oriel; they vowed to be all the world to each other, as in the first days of their married life; when in the happy seclusion of Oriel Park, they wished never to leave it. They thought not then of the world, because they feared it not; and their indifference was a triumphant proof of their affection, because that world held forth to them all its smiles. But now, both shrank from its powers, for both had learned to dread them. It was no longer an admiring but a censuring world from which they were secluding themselves; and bitter were the secret thoughts of each, as they reflected, that while returning to the path of duty, and devoting themselves to domestic life, they were drawing down the sarcasms of that world which they had not yet learned to estimate at its just price.

In trying to assuage their mutual feelings, each became continually aware of the futility of the effort. In praising retirement, they were conscious of the weighty motives both had to seek it; and their delicacy taking the alarm, mutual constraint ensued.

Ma'm'selle La Tour was discharged with a liberal present; the whole establishment was dismissed, with generous remunerations for their services; and Lord and Lady Oriel commenced their tour to the Lakes, more devoted than ever to each other; but the very excess of that devotion produced increased sensitiveness, and dread of the future.

Had Lord Oriel possessed strength of mind in proportion to his pride and tenderness of heart, happiness might again have dawned on them; but, alas! he was infirm of purpose, and, though not prepared to sacrifice his love to the world, he was nearly equally unprepared to confront that world in the discharge of conscious duties, while he thought his actions likely to be misinterpreted, or the finger of scorn pointed at his name. He had too much and too little pride; too much to be satisfied with aught less than the world's applause, and too little to be able to bear up against its tyranny and injustice.

Lady Oriel had failed to make this dis-

covery in happier times; but it now came home to her bosom, making her dread the present, and tremble for the future, as she saw that the world, the fickle capricious world, which she had neither the courage nor the wish to re-conquer, still held an empire over the mind of her husband, which would render happiness, independent of its opinion, difficult if not impossible to attain.

It has been well observed by an acute writer of our day, "that to be satisfied with the acquittal of the world, though accompanied with the secret condemnation of conscience, is the mark of a little mind; but that it requires a soul of no common stamp to be satisfied with its *own* acquittal, and to despise the condemnation of the world." The insufficiency of self-acquittal to satisfy the mind, must proceed from the consciousness that, however innocent in fact, we have been faulty in appearance; unjust as the world is, it can seldom wound us if we do not furnish it with weapons. The world exaggerates, and misinterprets, but rarely invents. We must lay a foundation ere it can build; but when once we have furnished it, there is no saying to what height the edifice will extend; and she who has committed one fault, must expect to be accused of a hundred crimes.

"*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute.*" In the life of a woman, one false step that cannot be disproved, renders every future step suspected; and the heart-wounding conviction of this injustice takes away the confidence of virtue, even long after its duties have been fulfilled.

## CHAPTER XXX.

"Our decrees,
Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead;
And liberty plucks justice by the nose."

"Some for renown, on scraps of learning dote,
And think they grow immortal as they quote."

Jim Cassidy returned from his work one evening, bringing with him the schoolmaster of the village, whom he had encountered on the road, and engaged to share his humble supper.

Grace felt that he did this to avoid a *tête-a-tête* with her, and sighed as she thought of other days, when Jim would have considered such an interruption on their privacy a hardship.

The schoolmaster was a simple, honest man, only remarkable for a habit of interlarding his discourse with scraps of Latin, even when addressing those totally ignorant of that language, which habit generally left his hearers in doubt as to one-half of his conversation, and not quite *au fait* of the other.

They were about to sit down to supper, when Larry M'Swigger made an addition to the party, and was cordially greeted by all.

"I'm afraid you don't like the supper," said Jim, observing that the schoolmaster was more intent on looking around him than on eating.

"Why, to spake the truth, Misther Cassidy," replied the pedagogue, "I am admiring *domus et placens uxor.*"

"I see how it is," said Larry, with an arch smile. "You were looking at Misthress Cassidy, and by speaking Latin, show that it was something she ought not to hear. Far be it from me to say, even in a dead language, what could offend a living ear, and that ear, moreover, attached to the head of a female."

"No, Misther M'Swigger, I was thinking on looking around me, that *fus est et ab hoste doceri*, as I remark many clever contrivances in this culinary apartment, which Misthress Cassidy must have taken from the English."

"Why, then, by my soul, if you knew her as well as I do, ever since she was a brat of a girl, and before too, you'd never be after suspecting her of taking any thing from the English, or any one else, but what was her right."

"You misconceive my maning, Misther M'Swiggan."

"Well, all my mistakes come from your spaking the Greek, which as neither the good man nor woman of the house understand any more than I do, it bothers us a little, and puts us at cross purposes. Sure, it's no offence I mane to you, for I used just to say the same to a Frenchman on board the ship with me, going to the West Indies, who was always for jabbering his outlandish lingo to me. 'Sir,' says I, 'if as how you're inclined to swap thoughts with me, take your choice of spaking Irish or English, which you'll find come just as aisy to you, as having to conster my words into your own mother tongue, which I suspect you'll be obliged to do before you know the maning.' He shook his head, and said, 'Bait.' 'Bait!' says I; 'faith, that's a game two can play at, and if I had you in my own sweet counthry, where the baiting is chaip, I'd see what you were made of.' Sure, he

knew well enough what I was after, for he looked as mad as a March hare, and after that we never swapped a word while we stopped in the ship."

"I think, Misther Cassidy, that your friend has a *cacoethes loquendi*," observed the schoolmaster.

"I hope you haven't said anything affronting to me," said Larry; "for ould as I am, I wouldn't sit by to see myself attacked; and, sure, if you have any thing to say to me, spake out in plain English or Irish, and don't be like a backbiter, saying what's not fair when my back is turned, for sure it's all one as being absent when I don't know what you say of me."

"I declare to you, Misther M'Swigger, that I have said nothing offensive, I am not disposed to quarrel, being, as you must observe, the *caput mortuum* of a sexagenarian."

"Well, there's more of it," said Larry. "Follow on, my ould boy, for I see it's useless to try to stop you once you've got floundering in your bog Latin."

"Misther M'Swigger, if you main to insult the erudition of which I am but as the mouthpiece, I'd have you to know that *contra stimulum calcas*."

"You see, Misther and Misthress Cassidy, he will keep throwing his bad words in my teeth; for, sure, as I said before, if they are not bad, why not say 'em out like a man, instead of disguising 'em in clothes, as he says himself, which I can't make head or tail of?"

"I repate, Mr. M'Swigger," replied the pedagogue, "that I do not wish to offend; of this you have only my *ipse dixit*, which I hope you will accept."

"Och! sure, if you're tipsy, it's another matther," said Larry. "Why didn't you say so at first? though, faith, I thought you looked a little confusthered, and seemed dumbfounded by spaking Greek and Latin to us all the evening, just to show your book larning."

The schoolmaster felt by no means inclined to allow Larry M'Swigger to continue in the belief that he pleaded inebriation as an excuse for whatever he might have said, and Grace was obliged to interfere, to bring them to a good understanding; which having accomplished, the schoolmaster declared that he must proceed to the Cat and Bagpipes, for the purpose of exhorting the men there assembled, and of opening their eyes to the danger of the evil courses they were at present pursuing.

"Faith," said Larry, "if you main to do that, I'd advise you to stick to the plain English, or, what's betther still, the Irish tongue, which is ten times as expressive, —then they'll know your maning; but if you bother 'em with the Greek and Latin, faith, you might just as well be whistling jigs to a milestone, in the hopes of making it dance."

"I have already arranged the discourse I main to give them," said the pedagogue. "I have no doubt it will produce a powerful effect on their unsophisticated understandings."

"Don't be too sure of that," said Larry. "Sure, they're already too much fisticated, as you call it, for it's a word and a blow with 'em on every occasion, and the blow first and the word afther. Sure, it would be well for many of 'em that they had no fists, for they do nothing but mischief with 'em; but if you're going, I'll just go with you, and maybe tell you what you had best say to 'em."

"*Cæcus iter monstrare vult*," murmured the schoolmaster.

"There he is at it again," said Larry. "I'm no more a monsther than yourself, and it is not over-mannerly of you to call me so."

"I percaive that if we continue to talk," said the schoolmaster, "it will be a *bellum internecivum* between us; but let us proceed to the Cat and Bagpipes, Mister M'Swigger. I shall be proud of your company on the way, for *comes jucundus in via pro vehiculo est*."

Jim Cassidy accompanied them to the scene of meeting, promising Grace that he would retire from it as soon as the schoolmaster had finished his speech to 'em, "For I'm curious," added Jim, "to see how they'll take advice in Latin, which they can't understand, when they won't listen, or at least won't mind, what's said to them in their own tongue; perhaps, for the raison that they can't understand, they'll pay more attention to it, for, somehow or other, we poor Irish are a little contrary whin we've got a quare notion in our heads."

Grace smiled at the truth of the last observation, and the three friends departed.

On reaching the sheebean-house, sounds of merriment and singing, with loud applauses, proclaimed that there was a full meeting, and they entered in time to hear the following song sung, or rather roared, by Bill Davin, better known by the appellation of "Rattling Bill," each verse of which elicited thunders of applause.

## SONG.

Sure, an't we all slaves in the chains
We've taken such trouble to get?
Ould England's the cause of our pains,
But she'll suffer the penalty yet.

We'll drive all the rich from the land,
And set up the poor in their stead;
By O'Blarney we'll all of us stand,
By O'Blarney we'll only be led.

For he is the broth of a boy;
How to get up a row he knows well;
In Parliament, sure, 'tis his joy
To bother their brains all pell-mell.

We tried long enough with troubles
The English to vex and enrage;
They thought our riots but bubbles,
Till they found we'd open war wage.

Boys! drink to the great agitator,
And long may he rule o'er the land,
For he is the only dictator,
And by him till death will we stand.

The vociferous plaudits that followed the song had no sooner subsided, than the schoolmaster asked permission to address the meeting, which was accorded by some of the assembly and refused by others. At length, however, it was decided that he should be heard. "We know he's an ould tory," said Rattling Bill, "but what of that? Hear him, hear him, say I;" and it was accordingly agreed that he should be heard.

"Neighbors and pupils, for many of you are my pupils," said the schoolmaster, "I am come here amongst you, like a *brutum fulmen*, to arouse you to the dangers that threaten you. Led on by a man who is ever seeking the *aura popularis*, you will pass the Rubicon, after which there is no retreat. He is determined to be *aut Cæsar aut nullus*, and to arrive at the former, he will make you the pedestal on which he will elevate himself. But remember, in doing this, he tramples on you; you but support his feet. He is a man who only uses arguments *ad captandum vulgus*, and is eminently skilled to *ambiguas in vulgum spargere voces*. But you, my countrymen, who are *adscriptus glebæ*, must never forget the proverb, *An nescis longas regibus esse manus?* I would prove to you that which is so rare, an *amicus certus in re incertâ cernitur*. Listen to me, therefore, not only with your ears, but your hearts, for if the ear hears and the heart heeds not, all arguments are vain.

"I am actuated by an *amor patriæ*, and would oppose my feeble voice against him who proves the verity of the old adage, *asperius nihil est humili cum surgit in altum*. I would call it *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, but to be sacrificed on the altar of ambition for the aggrandisement of one man—no, this I could not bear. This man has established the system of *divide et impera*, and takes advantage of the power it gives him; he considers you all but as the *fæx populi*, to be thrown to the winds the moment he has used you. But before *jacta est alea*, reflect on the inevitable consequences of following his pernicious counsels, and remember that *gravis ira regum semper*. Poor and lowly as I am, I have *incoctum generoso pectus honesto*, and I would die sooner than be as those who *iras et verba locant*."

"Hear, hear, hear him," was repeated aloud; "sure what he says must be fine, for we can't understand the half of it. He baits out O'Blarney by three chalks. Faith, the ould boy is a grand scholar any way."

Larry M'Swigger was mortified with the success of the schoolmaster, and still more at the folly of his countrymen for applauding, merely because they could not understand. Poor Larry, with all his shrewdness, was too simple to be aware how many orators and literary works are judged of and approved on the same principle, and with this ignorance he thought to himself—"Well, after such applause, the ould boy will spake more Greek and Latin than ever, and there'll be no bearing with him. Now, if I was to spake plain sinse to 'em in plain English, it's ten to one if they'd listen to me, and more than ten to one if they'd give a single screech for me. But this comes of his book learning. Sure after all, it's a great help at a pinch, especially when it taches a body to spake with the thoughts and words of another, and no one can contradict it."

When order was restored, the schoolmaster resumed his speech; "Think not, my countrymen, that I am insensible to the misfortunes under which this divided country has groaned for centuries. Alas! *longa est injuria, longæ ambages*. But it is not by proving that we are unworthy of liberty, that we can hope to gain it. As well might the maniac try to persuade his keeper that he requires not the fetters that alone prevent his injuring himself and others, as for us to expect that government will grant us the rights we forfeit by our own violation of the laws. I can have no object but the *amor patriæ*, which throbs in my heart, for urging you to beware of evil advisers, whilst he who inflames your passions has twelve thousand golden rea-

sons for keeping up the heat of that mint that pays his agitation. But cursed is the gold that is earned by the misery of the people, and shameless must he be, who, while he declaims on the poverty and ruin of his country, accepts from that poverty and ruin the hire of acts that, if performed with sincere good-will for his country, he ought to be above receiving pay for, and if not, what shall be said of him?

"Paid patriots, my countrymen, are anomalies that I admit not of; I will believe him to be a patriot who struggles against poverty and oppression, and disdains to accept wages for services that never can, never ought to be paid. Of him who does otherwise it may be said, *vendidit hic auro patriam;* for what difference does it make that the gold comes from the sold? the chapman equally receives it.

"I would exhort you to pause and reflect. Return to your duties, and *ut ameris amabilis esto.* Show that you *can* be trusted, and you will be trusted. Show that you know how to respect the laws, and you will not long be exposed to know them by their severity, instead of by their protection. *Nunquam libertas gratior extat quam sub rege pio.* And when did a monarch sit on a throne more worthy to be so considered than ours? Let us not, my dear countrymen, force him to show us his power instead of his paternal love, nor compel him to give us the *ultima ratio regum.* Leave our grievances to be remedied by those who have the inclination to relieve, and the knowledge how to accomplish it; but attend not to him who, if we have wounds, puts an *unguis in ulcere.*"

"Faith, the ould boy is right", said one. "The ould scholar is no fool," said another. "Sure how could he be a fool with such fine larning as he has in his head?" interrogated a third. "If I had only the half of it, I'd speechify as well as the best of 'em, but when a body has only one's thoughts in one's pate, sure how can one make a speech?"

Rattling Bill was the first to address the schoolmaster, which he did in the following terms:—"Well, ould boy, you have been chopping Latin for some time, and we've listened to you for all the world, as if you were a prophet, though small profit it has brought us any way, for we didn't understand the half of it. So much the betther, perhaps, for I see by the drift of your shanahos, you'd be for thrying to persuade us to remain quiet till them English fitted on our handcuffs. Now I'm of the same mind as O'Blarney, that the only way to avoid danger, is to meet it halfway, and sure we've been more than half way on the road to meet it, and now is not the time to turn our backs on ourselves. And let me ax you, what would we do to pass the time, if we did'nt kick up a bit of a row? Sure it's the only occupation we have, and if we like to give our money to him that divarts us, and keeps us always warm with the fiery things he puts into our minds, that's our own affair. Sure, I've heard that the grandees find time so dull on their hands, that they pay lashings of money to play-actors to agitate 'em, either by making 'em laugh or cry; and why shouldn't we pay our own play-actor, who can do both; and prevents our ever bothering ourselves about thinking of paying rints or tithes, or providing for the wives and brats at home, which we used to be breaking our heads and hearts too, to prepare for? No, no, O'Blarney has taught us a trick worth two of that, and I'm for sticking by him let what will happen. When I think how, before I knew O'Blarney, I used to be bothering the life out of myself, sure, faith I laugh at my folly; for now when the agent, talks to me of the next gale of rent, I think that may be there'll be another sort of a gale before that comes, that will blow away rents, landlords, and agents too, and lave us, like the wreckers on the shore, to pick up whatever escapes from the ship that has perished; so you'll find we'll have the best of it."

"But when you see the soldiers and the police pouring down on us like a mountain floud; sweeping every thing before 'em," said an old man who had not before spoken, "what will you say then? when our wives and children are starving and unprotected, and ourselves between four walls in a stone jug,* where we may be found morning, noon, and night, and obliged to stand our trials for all the troubles we've brought on the country, sure, Bill, you'll wish you had hearkened to the schoolmaster's advice, and if you're transported to Botany Bay, or are condemned to dance a jig upon nothing, 'twill then be too late to repent. Think of the judge putting on the black cap—think of the terrible words he will spake, the solemn faces of all the court, and the wail of the heart-broken wife; and then ax yourself how much better it would be to stop in time. Think also of the terrible night in the condemned cell—the last

* An Irish phrase for jail.

night. A disgraceful death the passport to an offended God—the horror of the present—the terror of the future—the grief of all who love you, and the shame you leave 'em. Ah, if you would think of all this, you would turn from those that would lead you into such snares, and you would yet be saved."

"But do you think," replied Rattling Bill, "that there's the laist chance of its coming to all this? Why, don't you see that we have the best of it? Was the counthry ever in such a state of throuble as we've put it into at present? Fresh disturbances every day, and at every side? And hasn't our laider sent us a steel to to whet our pikes? As for our mimbers that's in London, sure they're carrying every thing before 'em by the force of their speeches. Didn't our laider call the Parliament Commons the other day six hundred scoundrels? Sure that's spaking plain enough; I dare say it's the first time they ever heard such names, but they'll hear worse before he has done with 'em, if they let him go on."

"Yes, and how cleverly he got out of it afther," replied Larry M'Swigger; "Oh! let him alone for that. He's the boy that can get out of a scrape. He said he did, and he didn't call 'em such names; and all the House was crying out *oh! oh!* as well they might, to see his 'cuteness. And he said sure, if he did say it, it was in the *hate* of the moment; but sure it isn't the *hate* of a moment, but the *hate* of a life, that he has against the English, as well we know, for, faith, he can't bear to allow any one to attempt to govern Ireland but himself, and small blame to him, it's quite natural afther having had his own way so long. Now, them English are quare people, and don't often call bad names; but when oncet they say a thing, they never will deny their words, and that's where our laider has the advantage over 'em, and this bothers 'em. Now there's that Misther Manly, that gentleman that they call an *Irish* secretary, which is a bull, as he is an English secretary; now, when he spakes, he never baits about the bush, but comes to the truth at oncet, and yet the people in the Parliament listens to him, and never coughs or laughs, or cry *oh! oh!* as they do for our mimbers, but keep crying out *hear! hear! hear!* Sure, they seem as if they never would be tired of hearing him, and yet he never gives 'em the hard words, or clips the king's English, as our mimbers do—long life to 'em say I, but a little more raison."

"Well, sure," said Rattling Bill, "it will be a hard case, and a cruel case too, if we can't go about at nights killing, maiming, houghing, burning, and flogging, as we've been doing lately, but be forced to stay at home and go to bed. Who could stand this? and to be obliged to mind our work, and not attend 'sociations, nor follow the advice of our laider and his followers—better be hung at once. Then they want to thry us by soldiers instead of by jurors, which we never will stand, for we can frighten jurors at any time, but the devil himself wouldn't frighten them soldiers, who, not being used to our ways, would think our killing a few spalpeens a great crime, and make nothing of swinging or transporting us for it. But our own jurors, who are used to it, arn't so severe; besides they're afraid to be too hard on us, knowing that we'd soon pay 'em a visit, and pay 'em nately, for their justice. No, no, we must keep away the trials by soldiers, for there's no joke, as we'll find to our cost, if they come amongst us."

"We may defy trials and soldiers too, if we behave dacently and quietly," replied Larry M'Swigger, "and show the English we have raison, which we've never shown 'em yet; for, to tell the truth, when they call us the wild Irish, it's the mad and the wicked Irish they might call us, without telling any fibs."

"But aren't we in honor bound to stand by O'Blarney?" asked Rattling Bill. "And wouldn't it be a shabby and a mane thing too, to turn our backs on him, now that all the English are laughing and coughing him down, and that he doesn't seem to have a leg to stand on? Sure, in honor and dacency we're bound to stand by him to the last, and maybe he'll come to his senses, and write to us to lave our disturbances; but 'till he does we had better go on in the ould way."

It was evident, even from the subdued tone of Rattling Bill, that the schoolmaster's speech had produced some effect on his hearers, and that even in their rude breasts and turbulent spirits, a sentiment of generosity was the strongest bond that still attached them to their leaders. When will the natural good qualities of this misled people be allowed to display themselves, and to win admiration where they have hitherto been accustomed to excite only dread or dislike? Let us hope that this period is not far distant.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

"So love does raine
In stoutest minds, and maketh monstrous warre:
He maketh warre, he maketh peace againe,
And yett his peace is but continuall jarre:
O miserable men that to him subject arre!"

The spirits of Lord and Lady Oriel felt lightened when they had left London, and each mile that they retreated from it seemed to render them more cheerful. The fair and delicate hand which Lord Oriel pressed within his, returned the pressure; and the renewed tenderness of their sentiments made them feel as if they had escaped from some direful calamity, some deluge that had threatened to annihilate, or, worse—to separate them for ever.

All this was felt, but not expressed. At such moments, language appears too cold, too feeble to convey our thoughts, and a look—a pressure of the hand, speaks more eloquently to the feelings, than all that words could express.

The blow which Lady Oriel's health had received in the late shock, rendered her too delicate to travel rapidly; but, so tranquilly, if not happily, passed the hours, that she wished not to abridge their brief career. Lord Oriel read to her, and, when fatigued, she leaned her head on his shoulder with more tenderness, if with less confidence, than on former journeys, because she felt that henceforth they must be all the world to each other, while hitherto the world had been much to them. They stopped the first evening at * * * *, and while waiting for tea, Lord Oriel took up a newspaper that lay on the table, while Lady Oriel closed her eyes to protect them from the glare of light in the room, which after some hours of darkness in the carriage had dazzled them. On opening them, her glance fell on her husband, and she was shocked at witnessing the change a few minutes had produced in his appearance. The hand that held the paper trembled; his face was deadly pale; and wildly and furtively he glanced at her, and perceiving he had excited her attention, hastily left the room, carrying with him the paper.

When he returned, the traces of suppressed agitation were visible in his countenance, and it instantly occurred to Lady Oriel that the paper he had been perusing must have contained some statement relative to her, which had caused this change; but on which she dared not, either for his sake or her own, trust herself to speak to him. Her embarrassment was increased by observing that when tea was brought in, the three officious waiters who attended, seemed to examine her and Lord Oriel with peculiar attention. This might only be imagination, but she thought that Lord Oriel seemed to have made the same remark, and that he shrank beneath the infliction. All his efforts to keep up a cheerful conversation for the rest of the evening were unavailing; both felt their restraint, but neither dared to comment upon it.

At each resting-place on the route, Lady Oriel observed that her husband studiously removed the newspapers from her sight. This studied precaution increased the nervous agitation which each day gained ground, and added to the languor and feverish excitement that was exhausting her strength. His affectionate attention seemed redoubled, and he watched over her with a tenderness known only to those who have witnessed or been the object of those nameless attentions that an all-engrossing and anxiously excited affection bestows in illness or in affliction.

Arrived at the Lakes, they took up their abode at the inn at Keswick, and were more surprised than pleased, at finding that Lord and Lady Borrodaile, with their daughter, occupied the suite of rooms next theirs. Old connections had thrown the families of Oriel and Borrodaile much into each other's society; but a total want of sympathy, and as total a difference of taste, had precluded the intimacy and cordiality that generally arise between people who often meet; and left in its place a cold and formal politeness, beyond which neither parties wished to pass.

This untoward rencontre was evidently as disagreeable to Lord Oriel as to his wife, though he took some pains to appear indifferent to it, and proposed with affected carelessness not to make any effort to renew an intercourse which had never afforded them any pleasure. Lady Oriel felt all that was passing in his mind, and determined on avoiding, as much as lay in her power, the possibility of meeting the Borrodailes. The constraint likely to be imposed by this resolution, was contemplated with a depression of spirits both by husband and wife; and they retired to their pillows *gene* by the dread of the morrow.

What are called *presentiments* are but a knowledge of the future, acquired by experience; and they are seldom fallacious. Those that depressed Lord and Lady Oriel at night, were increased in the morning by

discovering that, unless they made themselves prisoners in their chamber, there was little chance of avoiding their neighbors, as the rooms were so near, and they were so continually passing from the salon to the bed-rooms, that not to meet would be almost impossible.

Lady Oriel was going to her sitting-room, when Lady Borrodaile, with one of her daughters, came suddenly upon her. The girl appeared embarrassed and awkward, blushed and turned away; but the mother drew herself up, with an air of affected dignity, and having thrown as much angry expression into her small gray eyes as they would contain, which expression was turned on the beautiful face of Lady Oriel, she seized her daughter's hand and hurried her quickly away, as if fearful of contamination by contact with her.

All this was the business of a moment; but its effects on Lady Oriel were overpowering. She retreated to her bed-room, to endeavor to calm her agitation before she joined Lord Oriel at breakfast, and she had been twice summoned to that repast, ere she had courage to encounter him.

Whilst writhing under the insult she had just received, her only source of consolation was, that her husband had not witnessed it. Her own humiliation, hard as it was to be borne, she could bear; but *his*, brought on him too by her, was more than she had fortitude to resist. The Indian proverb says, that contempt can pierce even the shell of the tortoise. How then must it have wounded the sensitive mind of a proud woman! She had now to learn the painful lesson, that we may be stung by the marked disrespect of those whose warmest approbation could give us no satisfaction, and that the bitterness of the mortification inflicted is not diminished by our consciousness of the unworthiness of the source whence it springs.

It was a great relief to Lady Oriel, to see in about an hour afterwards, preparations going on at every side for the departure of the Borrodaile family. Her conclusions that this event w s expedited by her arrival, were borne out by the officious intelligence of the landlord of the inn, who, when presenting the *menu* for dinner, observed that the departure of Lord Borrodaile's family was very unexpected, as their rooms had been engaged for another week. When this communication was made, Lady Oriel stole a glance at her husband, and his heightened color and averted looks betrayed to her that he also had guessed the motives of the Borrodailes' sudden departure, though he avoided all recurrence to it.

Each new arrival at the inn filled Lady Oriel with alarm. It was in vain that she endeavored to reason herself into tranquillity, by dwelling on the happiness that was still hers, in possessing a husband dearer to her than ever, and who, however a cruel and envious world might slander or misjudge her, was convinced of her purity. But, alas! she felt that the warmth and delicacy of her attachment to him, gave fresh poignancy to the bitterness of knowing that *he* was wounded through her; and often did she mentally acknowledge, that all other sufferings would be light in comparison to beholding him shrinking beneath the stain her indiscretion had fixed on his honor. She even thought that a total separation from him would be less wretched than the state of constraint in which they lived, and the witnessing the humiliations she had drawn on him.

The *séjour* at the lakes had failed to give them the pleasure they had anticipated, and they now began to suspect that solitude alone could save them from the perpetual rencontres with persons they wished to avoid. Without daring to expose their thoughts to each other, thoughts in which so strong a sympathy existed, they mutually wished to direct their steps to Oriel Park; but neither had courage to make the proposition, till remarking one day some plants that reminded them of similar ones transplanted the year before at their home, it led to an expression of "How well the gardens must now be looking," and a determination to go there was the consequence.

The journey was long and tedious, both the travellers being occupied with painful reflections, in which retrospections of the happy past were contrasted with fears for the clouded future. Their anxiety to conceal such thoughts, with the increased tenderness a mutual pity excited, only added to the painfulness and constraint of their situation. The sensitiveness and pride of Lord Oriel, taking alarm at every incident, kept alive in his wife's mind the continual recollection of her misfortune, and destroyed the self-confidence which a consciousness of innocence might otherwise have given her.

It was on a Saturday evening that Lord and Lady Oriel reached their home. During the last ten miles of their journey they had passed through their own estate, and were greeted by smiles of welcome, even more flattering than the marks of deep re-

spect that accompanied them, from the happy and prosperous peasantry they encountered at every step returning from their accustomed labors.

The cottages peeping forth from the trees and flowers that shaded them, the paled-in gardens, redolent with the flaunting pride of autumn, the cheerful fires seen blazing through the bright windows half filled with plants, and the rosy cheeked children at the gates, watching the return of their fathers to share the evening repast, all presented a picture of rural happiness, that for a short time banished the sense of their own depressed spirits, and the cause, from the breast of the owners of this exhilarating scene.

The unsophisticated joy their presence seemed to afford, was healing to the wounded pride beneath which the travellers had lately rankled. They were conscious of their power of dispensing happiness to hundreds—a consciousness that in itself precludes that deep sense of self-humiliation under which they had drooped for the last few weeks; and as Lady Oriel reclined her head on the shoulder of her husband, and with eyes beaming with love, sought his glance, she met a look of satisfied affection, to which his intelligent countenance had long been a stranger; and for which she requited him with a fervent and grateful pressure of the hand enclosed within her own.

The air of busy gladness with which their servants welcomed them, was damped by an appearance of curious examination, convincing the conscious master and mistress, that the slanderous reports in circulation in the artificial sphere they had quitted, had reached their home. The demonstrative attentions of affection which passed between them—perhaps somewhat more evident now than a consciousness of their position suggested to them the probable examination to which their manners might be subjected—were regarded with triumphant smiles by the old servants, as proofs of the total falsehood of the reports that had reached them: and during the late dinner that was served on their arrival, each gentle interchange of tender courtesy and kindness was noted by the significant looks and happy countenances of these faithful domestics.

Lord and Lady Oriel, in remarking this display of respectful sympathy, felt that the rank breath of scandal had scathed even their household gods, and that the lustre of untarnished honor and purity, which identified them with all around, was blighted. The princely splendor of the apartments, the treasures of art scattered at every side, reminding them of their high station, and, alas! too, of all the publicity that high station commanded, of which neither had ever before so forcibly felt the responsibility, seemed at present to weigh them down with a sense of oppressive and insupportable melancholy. As they retired to their chamber through the grand picture-gallery, they almost shrank beneath the stately and dignified glances with which a long train of ancestral nobles appeared to regard them from the massive and coronet-crowned frames ranged along its vast length.

Humbly did Lady Oriel, in the privacy of her oratoire, pray to the Fountain of all Mercy that some portion of the peace which had hitherto blessed her in this happy spot, might now be vouchsafed her; and bitter were the tears she shed, when she recollected the different feelings with which she had last knelt on the same hassock, then as much a stranger to the suspicion of guilt, as she was still to its reality. But her bitterness was soothed by the reflection that it was only the *suspicion* she had to weep over; and she thanked the Almighty, who had preserved her from a worse fate.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

"O reputation! dearer far than life!
Thou precious balsam, lovely, sweet of smell,
Whose cordial drop once spilt by some rash hand,
Not all the owner's care, not the repenting toil,
Of the rude spiller, ever can collect
To its first purity and native sweetness!"

Lord and Lady Oriel made it a rule to be regular attendants at divine service. They went to church the day after their arrival, and felt the soothing influence each well-known object had over them. They arrived before the service had commenced, and as their eyes fell on the family monuments—monuments so often looked upon, and never without chastened feelings, the nothingness of all that had lately agitated them seemed more forcibly brought before them. In the pew they now occupied, once sat the persons, whose names, recorded on the marble before them, and whose memories, perhaps treasured by a few, were all that now remained—shadows, that had appeared and passed away, to be followed by others, alike destined to the same fleeting existence, and doomed

to sleep in the vault beneath. The same feelings and passions had actuated them; their hearts had beat with the same feverish pulses in youth; and disappointment and care, the lot of all, had reconciled them to the inevitable *dénouement* of the tragedy of death.

Nothing so strongly enables us to meet with dignity and resignation the misfortunes of life, as reflections on its brevity; and such reflections are never brought so vividly to the mind as in a place of divine worship, where our progenitors have offered up their prayers. We occupy their places among the living; our eyes dwell on, and our hearts repeat, the same supplications to the Deity so often offered up by them; our ears drink the solemn sounds of the same pealing organ that thrilled theirs; all the objects around have been familiar to their eyes, as they now are to our own; and they are sleeping the marble slumber of death in the cold dark vault, that sends forth its hollow reverberations to the sacred music they can hear no more. And we, too, who fret our little hour upon this mortal stage, shall soon rest with them! Others will take our places as we have taken theirs, to pass through the same existence, and to arrive at the same goal.

It is at such moments that we truly feel the nothingness—the worthlessness—of all that most preys upon us in life, and that the mind reposes, if not with hope, at least without dread, on that doom the inevitableness of which offers the only balm for ills that would be otherwise unbearable.

The soothing contemplations of Lord and Lady Oriel were interrupted by the commencement of the service; and, though occupied as both were by its duties, they could not avoid observing that all eyes were directed to their pew with an expression in which curiosity was much more apparent than that *bienveillance* and respectful attention which had hitherto been wont to greet their first appearance at church. The sermon, too, which, at any other period, would have only claimed attention for its merit, now seemed to their conscious imaginations as being appropriately chosen with a reference to their supposed position. Its subject was charity; not the charity of giving alms, of clothing the naked and feeding the hungry, but the greater, the more difficult, and more elevated charity of judging favorably the imputed or proved errors of others—a charity so seldom practised.

The earnest and fervid manner of Dean Vernon, their good pastor, lent additional force to the eloquence and purity of his words; and, (but it might be only fancy,) they thought that a kinder expression seemed to pervade the countenances of the congregation, whose glances were continually directed to their pew. The services being over, the acquaintances of Lord and Lady Oriel, who had been hitherto proud to flock around them and dispute their gracious smiles and shakes of the hand, now seemed to stand back, as if waiting to be guided by their pastor. The good dean having sought his wife and daughter, advanced with them to Lord and Lady Oriel; and the inquisitive examiners of the meeting observed, that if there was an increased gravity in his manner, there was also an affectionate cordiality in the greeting, which showed that, if he had been grieved by the injurious reports so shamefully blazoned in the newspapers, he had never believed them.

This public display of respect from the dignified and conscientious clergyman and his family, was the signal for the respectful salutations of the rest of their acquaintances; and they returned home with something of their accustomed feelings, though with a latent consciousness that to Dean Vernon's treatment they owed their good reception.

The next day's post brought Lady Oriel a letter from her brother from Ireland, announcing his intended marriage. It was filled with lover-like praises of his future wife. After enumerating her perfections, mental and personal, he added, "But I will sum up all by saying, that Frances Desmond is worthy to be the friend of my sister, and I anticipate with feelings of delight her residence in England, and her entrance into the world of fashion under your protection. I know not another woman of your age, my dearest Louisa, to whose guidance I would entrust Frances; and perhaps there are few who would like to take charge of so handsome a person as she is. But you are free from jealousy, as your reputation is established as a beauty, and, what is infinitely better, as an unsuspected wife—so you alone shall be her *chaperon*."

The letter fell from her trembling hands, and a violent flood of tears gave relief to her oppressed heart. The affectionate praises of her brother arriving at such a moment, pierced her to the soul, and she felt that *he* too, who had hitherto been a source of happiness to her, would henceforth be an additional cause of pain, as he,

like her husband, would be forced to blush for her.

"Oh! how dreadful is my position," exclaimed Lady Oriel. "I bring only shame and dishonor on those who love me; those for whom I would die to save them from a pang. How often have I looked forward to my dear brother's marrying, and giving me a sister to love; but now—how bitter is the thought! my imprudence has rendered me unworthy to be the friend of his wife; for how could I bear to have her exposed to any of the cruel animadversions which her association with me might, nay, must occasion?"

It was some time ere Lady Oriel could again take up her brother's letter to finish its perusal, but when she did, she was relieved by finding that he stated it was not his intention to come to England for some months, and she was grateful at being spared, even for so short a period, from the embarrassment which the arrival of his sister-in-law, under her present humiliating circumstances, must draw on her.

And now Lady Oriel felt, and felt with renewed bitterness, that even the appearance of guilt produced situations incompatible with the domestic affections. What could be a more convincing proof of this, than that she, who a short time ago would have anticipated with impatience, and hailed with delight, the arrival of her dear and only brother, now shrank from seeing him, and felt relieved that he was not coming for some months? She answered her brother's letter; and it was that answer, in which a tone of melancholy was so evident, that alarmed him. The manner in which Lady Abberville tore the veil of ignorance as to his sister's situation from the eyes of Colonel Forrester, is already known to our readers.

We must now return to London, where we left the Desmond family, and their son-in-law, waiting the answer to the letter which the Colonel had written to his sister on the subject of his proposed visit. This answer we will now lay before our readers.

"Never, my dearest brother, did I address you with such various feelings as at this moment, when joy at your arrival, after so long a separation, ought to be the only one I should entertain. How shall I tell you that I have had the misfortune of incurring scandal that has blighted my fame, and though innocent in deed, has sent me covered with shame into retirement? That I am guiltless, you will readily believe; but how few will render me this justice! Still, ought I, can I, let your young and spotless wife's reputation be exposed to the sarcasms that the ill-natured world may be inclined to throw on it, if she becomes my associate? I shrink from this responsibility, for, alas! have I not already brought dishonor on *him* I would have died to preserve from it? And you too, my brother, will you not have cause to blush for me, when you see the name of your sister, of whom you once were proud, made the subject of defamation?

"All that I have borne you may imagine, but I never can describe. My husband, my inestimable husband, like yourself, has never doubted me; but his affection and unswerving confidence, which ought to be my consolation, as they are my pride, only make me feel with more bitterness the dreadful position in which my inexperience and folly have placed us both. Lord Oriel knows that the tongue of slander is busy with my fame, and that even his continued confidence has not shielded me from its envenomed wounds. My own humiliation I could bear, but to draw shame on *him*, does, indeed, fill my soul with bitterness.

"But I have not yet told you what has led to this fearful degradation. Alas! it was my levity in permitting attentions; the motives of which, though obvious to others, never were suspected by me until the comments they excited had rendered me the subject of general conversation, and were reported to me through the mortifying medium of my own servant. I have frequently tried to write all this to you, but felt unequal to the task. Now, however, it can no longer be delayed, and mine is the bitter, the humiliating duty of telling you, that you have no longer a sister of whom you can be proud, or one that can be an honorable companion to your wife.

"I can never do justice to the delicacy of the conduct of my dear husband all through this fearful business; but I tremble when I think of the mortification I have entailed on his proud spirit: and fear that even you will think I ought not to have subjected him to a continuance of humiliation by accepting the protection his love affords me, now that *he* alone, besides yourself, believes me worthy of it.

"I have had great struggles on this point. You, who know how I love my husband, can imagine the despair which a separation from him would cause me;

but the misery of seeing him exposed to mortification and suffering brought on him by me, is almost as bad.

"Your happiness is my only source of consolation. If you wish to preserve that, let not your young and inexperienced wife, in the consciousness of innocence, be exposed to attentions, which, though they fail to sully the purity of her mind, may leave a stain on her reputation that all her tears can never efface. Be her guide and adviser; warn her of the approach of danger; be careful that her conduct exempt her from the possibility of misconstruction, and that her purity be as little doubted by the world as by yourself. So will you both be spared the misery now felt by your affectionate sister,

"LOUISA ORIEL."

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

"'Tis slander,
Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
Outvenoms all the worms of Nile, whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie
All corners of the world: kings, queens, and states,
Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave,
This viperous slander enters."

COLONEL FORRESTER saw at a glance the whole position of his sister; and knowing the character of her husband, he felt all that she must suffer from his pride and susceptibility. He, too, had indulged in an almost blamable pride of his sister. He had seen her the idol most worshipped in the temple of fashion; and, conscious of her purity and fixed principles, he had never for a moment suspected the possibility of her losing that high consideration in the world which he saw her enjoying. But, alas! in proportion to her elevation had been her fall; for those who once durst hardly have approached the altar of this earthly divinity, were now the most ready to trample on her. His manly heart bled when he contemplated his still pure and high-minded sister exposed to the sneers and calumny of those incapable of believing her innocence, because incapable of passing the fiery ordeal of temptation undefiled, as she had done.

But while he grieved over her imprudence, and its fatal consequences, how did he rejoice in her innocence! With the conviction of this, he could stand forth her champion undismayed, and he could place by her side the wife of his bosom, his own pure and high-souled Frances, without aught, save pleasurable feelings. Never did his heart yearn towards his sister more tenderly than at this period, and the letter he wrote her was filled with every expression of undiminished confidence, affection, and sympathy.

A worldly-minded brother would have remained away from the scene of his sister's degradation at such a moment, and would either have contented himself with appearing ignorant of the circumstance; or have taken the opportunity of sending her a lecture on her imprudence, mixed up with some comments on the chances of its results extending to him. All the possible annoyances would have been dwelt on, until he had made her feel that in a brother she had found a censurer instead of a friend.

But Colonel Forrester was no worldly minded brother, and therefore he tried to comfort and assuage the already too bitter feelings of his sister. He made Mr. and Mrs. Desmond acquainted with the letter of Lady Oriel; for, as they had heard the statement of Lady Abberville, he thought this exposition necessary. They were too good, too honorable, and too pure themselves, not to enter with warmth into the feelings of the writer; and they named an early day for leaving town for Oriel Park, determined to contribute all in their power to re-establish its mistress in the high station which she was so calculated to adorn.

It has been before stated, that Mrs. Desmond was English. Her connections were among the highest and most influential of the aristocracy, and she had always kept up a constant and cordial intercourse with them. The Desmonds belonged to no clique, sought not for supremacy, because their due portion of respect was accorded to them; and they were as ignorant of the petty intrigues, jealousies, "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness," that characterise the circle, designated by the *prétentieuse* and insulting cognomen of "The Exclusives," as though they had never lived in London during the season.

The circle in which Mr. Desmond moved, has ever been distinguished for the purity of its morals, the dignity of its manners, and the unaffected decorum of its members. This circle is a kind of oasis in the desert of the vast metropolis, refreshing to all who approach it, and where politics, that powerful leveller, has no influence, as Whigs and Tories are equally well received in it. It would be invidious to name the females who adorn this high and pure aristocracy; but we

might make a long list, and glory in holding up to imitation women of whom England may well be proud, though they are neither patronesses of Almack's, nor obstinate sticklers for any system of exclusiveness, excepting that which regards moral character.

Mrs. Desmond suggested to her son-in-law the propriety of introducing Lady Oriel into this circle. "They all know me well," added the good woman, "and will take your sister on the faith of my character. Nay, it is more than probable that they are in perfect ignorance of all the vile reports, for they neither talk scandal nor read scandalous publications. But if they heard them, they would conclude them false the moment they saw Lady Oriel living on the best terms with her honorable and high-minded husband, and that she was the associate chosen by me for my daughter. The consciousness of your sister's establishment in this really respectable circle, will soothe the wounded sensibility of your brother-in-law, and restore him to all his former feelings. So we must persuade them to return with us to London for the season, however little disposed they may be to do so.

Colonel Forrester felt the good sense and kindness of Mrs. Desmond, and rejoiced in thinking of the invaluable female friends—the *rarest* of all acquisitions—he had secured for his sister, in Mrs. Desmond and her daughter.

The party set out for Oriel Park, and were not sorry to see in all the fashionable newspapers an announcement of their departure from Thomas's Hotel, Berkley Square, to join the distinguished individuals, who were on a visit to the Earl and Countess of Oriel. They knew London and its fashionable inhabitants sufficiently well, to be aware that one half of them would conclude the other half were amongst the guests of Oriel Park, and forget all scandalous histories, in their desire to be there also. Such are London fashionables!

When we censure London fashionables for the heartlessness and selfishness which have rendered them proverbial, the censure is applied to them not as individuals, but as a body. It is the system that produces the evil, and it is only while acting *en masse* that they are faulty. The same persons who in the country, removed from the influence of the many-headed monster, ycleped fashion, are rational and well disposed, in London, lose their own identity, and adopt all the conventional egotism of their different cliques. They have raised a monstrous idol, whose worship demands a continual sacrifice of all the best and purest feelings, and they are frightened at this imaginary hydra of their own creation. The opinions of their circle are made the alpha and omega of their line of conduct; and it is not the wrong or the right of such or such a step, but the "What will the world say of it?" which governs them. Moral rectitude and kind feelings are all made subservient to the tyrannical sway of fashion, and the most ill-natured actions are committed without a particle of malice, merely because each individual of a clique must act as the others do.

Only one thing can be said in favor of this system of congregating, and loss of identity, namely, the humility it implies; for a person with any consciousness of mental superiority, could never offer up his tastes and feelings at the shrine of an earth-formed deity, who delights only in mediocrity. M'Adam has not more effectually reduced the surface of our streets to the same level, than has fashion macadamised the minds of her votaries. No inequalities remain—no elevations to mark a difference. All are flattened down; and one may bowl along through fashionable life without encountering any more jolts from genius, talent, or affectionate feelings, than one should receive on the highways of the modern Colossus of *Roads*, as he has been aptly named.

This community of the private stock of thoughts and feelings of each individual, to the public stock, reminds one of the partition of goods and repasts in common among the Spartans. There are *other* points of resemblance also, which we leave to the ingenuity of the reader to discover; only premising that England has arrived at too great a degree of civilisation to sanction a partition of goods. It is only in thoughts, feelings, time and repasts she tolerates a community—property is carefully preserved for private use or public display, and nowhere is more respect paid to the distinctions of *meum* and *tuum*.

We must not omit to state that which we had nearly overlooked, namely, that the habitual reference to the received usages of fashionable life, on all cases of feeling as well as of etiquette, has its advantages. Private sympathies, and family affection, with all the embarrassments they are so likely to entail, are at once abolished by the irrevocable laws of fashion; and one is absolved from the pain-

ful necessity of extending invitations to brothers or sisters not *a la-mode*, or living out of the set of the fashionables. "They don't mix with our clique," is considered by a woman of fashion as a satisfactory and unanswerable mode of accounting for any breach of family kindness: she is innocent—the world alone is guilty.

How much trouble is saved by this conventional mode, this true *savoir vivre*? Precedents are established, from which there is no appeal; and in cases of reproach from slighted friends, left-off cousins, and cut acquaintances, a reference to the standing laws of the society acquits the reproached of any breach *des covenances de sa clique*, or of being at all (as a lady in such a case once candidly said) influenced by private feelings. Yet some of the most admirable women, and excellent men are to be found in the circles denominated, *par excellence*, the fashionable world. They enter them as they would a theatre, and are but as an audience; while those whom we have described *en masse*, are the actors who have so identified themselves with their *roles*, that they have forgotten their original characters, and never figure but in those they have assumed. It is for this weakness that we have criticised them; as, however excellent the performance may be a little more variety would be agreeable.

Marmontel described the fashionables of his own time and country, as "*Passant la moitié de leur temps a rien faire, et l'autre moitié a faire des riens*," a description more applicable to ours at present, as the French confine their fashionable homage to dress alone; and each individual contributes his or her quota to society without attempting to dictate to it, or establish codes, except as far as regards the toilette.

In Italy, the "*dolce far niente*" operates so powerfully on the habits of its luxurious natives, that few could be found who would submit to the trouble of framing laws, or following them, for the regulation of that which they consider merely as an *accessoire* to general society; and there are perhaps from this cause, less heart-burnings and bitter feelings in Italy than elsewhere.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

"O! sacred sorrow! by whom souls are tried,
Sent not to punish mortals, but to guide;
If thou art mine, and who shall proudly dare
To tell his Maker he has had his share?
Still let me feel for what thy pangs are sent,
And be my guide, and not my punishment."

In addition to her own troubles, Grace Cassidy had many friends and relations who had fallen victims to the system, into which they were led by the designing and self-interested, and she had to weep over the consequences of errors she could not defend; errors still more to be deplored, because their commission marks not alone the want of sense but the want of principle, two deficiencies which are too frequently inseparable.

A first cousin of Grace had been imprisoned on a charge of having been implicated in the murder of the police-man killed by Jack Donovan. His wife was in her confinement, and his first-born child was supposed to be at the point of death, when Grace sought their cabin to perform the duties of humanity.

A few months before, the cottage of Patrick Mahoney was remarkable for its air of cleanliness and comfort. He was an industrious and sober man, an affectionate husband to a mild, gentle creature, and the fond father of one of the finest boys in the village. Every thing round them flourished, and they were quoted as an example of the good effects of prudence and steady conduct. But in a luckless hour, Patrick had listened to the counsel of one, whom not to listen to would have been deemed sin; and ruin and misery followed his obedience.

Wretched are those, and miserable must they remain, whose religious, moral, and social duties, are in direct variance. An observance of the advice of his spiritual director is supposed to be as necessary for the future salvation of a Roman Catholic, as obedience to the laws, and respect to the implied wishes of his landlord, are considered necessary to his worldly welfare. When these several obligations happen to be in violent opposition, how difficult is it for a poor, and well-disposed, but ignorant man, to choose between ruin here and perdition hereafter! And is it to be wondered at, that many risk and merit the first, to avoid the second? Such was the case with Patrick Mahoney; for unfortunately he, like all his countrymen of the class to which he belonged, with a strong predisposition to good, had no fixed principles to guide him; and consequently fell a ready victim to the pernicious advice of those who should have saved him.

In a country where the true principles of religion are understood, the precepts of its ministers must be in accordance with its tenets; but in the Catholic church, in

Ireland, where superstition supplies its place, and where moral duties are as undefined as they are miscomprehended, the priests wield a power as dangerous as it is in general misapplied; and those who yield an implicit obedience to it, which in the early ages would have won for them the palm and glory of martyrdom, have now all the sufferings, but none of the glory. Some there are among the Catholic clergy who are pious, good men, fulfilling the duties of their station with exemplary perseverance, charity, and humility; but they become every day more rare, and one dictator can encourage a thousand Jesuits to be ready to act as his political agents whenever he intimates that he has occasion for their services; and what such services as they can lend may accomplish, the last few years in Ireland bear painful witness.

Grace found poor Mary Mahoney laid on the bed of sickness; her body exhausted by suffering, but her mind still more afflicted. Her pale face was contrasted by her straight raven brows, and the long black eyelashes, that threw a shadow over her cheeks. A dead infant was placed in a cradle near her bed, and her poor sick child was lying by her side, his heavy eyes and flushed cheek denoting the ravages that fever was making in his constitution. His poor mother was continually moistening his lips with some syrup, and the glance of mute, meek, subdued anguish with which she looked from the sick boy to the dead infant, and then at Grace, spoke more powerfully than words could have done, all that was passing in her mind.

Grace attempted not to comfort the bereaved mother, for she felt that the attempt would be unavailing; but she actively bestirred herself to have the sick boy put into a small bed, and kept as cool as possible, and made the necessary preparations to have the dead infant removed for interment.

Mary Mahoney submitted to all Grace's arrangements, merely saying, "Let me kiss my poor baby before you hide it from me for ever. It never had a father's kiss; but promise me, Grace, that you will go to the prison to my husband, and try to comfort him. Poor Patrick wants it more than I do, and tell him, dear Grace, what a sweet baby it was; but no—don't tell him, for he would only regret it the more, and he has had too much trouble already. Tell him, Grace a-vourneen, that I am better, and doing finely; quite reconciled to the will of God, and always praying for him. Tell him that our poor boy is aisier, and to have no care about us. Oh! Grace asthore, spake kindly to him, with your own sweet, mild, sensible voice, and 'twill do him good, and take the bitterness out of his heart, just as honey cures the wound that is made by the sting of wasps; and ochone! he has been stung, and to the quick too. Mind, a-vourneen, you tell him how well I am, and give him this kiss for me," pressing her pale, cold lips on the forehead of Grace.

The coffin which a kind neighbor had ordered for the dead infant before Grace had arrived, was now brought in, and a tremulous movement about the lips, and still more marble paleness, proved the renewed anguish of the mother. "Grace ma-vourneen," murmured she, "don't raison with me, for I'm beyond raison, my heart, and my poor head are so tired; but do, for mercy-sake, what I ask you. Sprinkle the coffin with holy water. Now bring it here, and lay it on the bed, and fetch me the flannels you'll find in the corner cupboard. There—that will do; help me to sit up, that I may make my baby's last bed."

She folded the flannels smoothly, one over the other, making a little elevation like a pillow, and then pointed for Grace to bring her the dead infant. When it was brought to her she kissed its little face and hands several times, pressed it to her bosom, and then placed it gently in the coffin.

"I had hoped, my precious babe," said she, "to have placed you in a softer bed, and to have made my breast your pillow; but the Almighty has thought fit to take you from me, and I submit without murmuring to *his* holy will. The thoughts of you, child of my heart, shall make me still more desirous so to do my duty in this life, that I may meet you in Heaven."

She bowed her head to kiss, once more, the infant, and then said to Grace, "Now, dear friend, close the coffin, I have looked my last on that sweet face; and lift the curtain of the little bed where my boy lies, that I may see I have still a child left me. Och! Grace, it is a blessed thing to be a mother; but to see the babe, for which one has suffered so much, carried away from one for ever, is a bitter thing. Then it seems, too, as if a child lost, was a link lost of the blessed chain of love between man and wife; but no, I won't think this, for grief draws hearts together."

Grace had the little bed of the sick boy brought nearer to his poor mother, and the

dead infant removed for interment; and having made every thing round the sick woman as comfortable as circumstances would admit, poor Mary became so anxious that Grace should proceed to Dungarvan to visit Patrick in his prison, that she left her to return to her own home, to demand the company of Jim on the expedition.

When she was quitting the room, poor Mary called her once more to beg she would be sure to tell Patrick how finely she was going on, and not to be uneasy about her.

What an inexhaustible mine of tenderness is there in woman's heart! Here was this helpless creature, with a frame worn down by illness, and a mind bowed by anxiety for a husband and child, and grief for the death of her infant, forgetting her own misery to send comfort to her husband; to that husband who had occasioned all her troubles by his obstinacy in rejecting her advice and entreaties, and who had plunged her in such alarm as to cause a premature labor and the death of her child. The thought that he would feel all this with bitterness and self-accusation, rendered her the more anxious to make him believe that she was doing well, for affection triumphed over all suffering and selfishness. Affection is the true, the only refiner of our natures; and the humblest peasant in her cottage who feels it, is at heart more refined than the proudest princess who is unconscious of its influence, but who would be shocked by an unpolished phrase or an inelegant expression. There is a wide distance between refinement of the heart and refinement of the manners; and we see many instances of the latter, with a total deficiency of the former.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

"The virtues of others often serve as a light to illumine our own mental darkness, and to incite us to goodness."

Grace Cassidy returned with a heavy heart to her cottage. The resignation and meekness of Mary Mahoney had filled her with admiration and pity, and she accused herself of not having, with the patience of her friend, borne the trials that Jim's obstinacy had entailed on her. "Oh," said she, "what were my trials to hers? and how thankful ought I to be to God! Short-sighted and ungrateful that I have been, how have I lamented not being a mother! and now that I know the misery children may cause, have I not reason to rejoice that this grief has not fallen to me, as I might, like Mary Mahoney, have seen my babe shut from my sight for ever? Oh! 'twas a bitter sight, to behold her pale face laid against the dead face of her infant, as she gave it the last kiss; and her words, and, above all, the meek look of the poor creature, made me feel a choking that I have seldom undergone before. It reminded me so much of the old song of a mother to her dead child, which I used to think too sorrowful to be true, that poor Mary seemed the very person who made it, and it has been ringing in my ears ever since.

'Oh! sleep, my babe, on that cold bed
On which I lay thy precious form;
I thought to pillow thy fair head
Upon a mother's bosom warm.

'But death, cold death, has snatch'd my child,
And sorrow fills my aching breast;
Nor can it soothe my anguish wild
To know my darling is at rest.

'Yes, precious babe, thou'rt gone to sleep,
Unknowing all the cares I feel:
Thine eyes had yet not learned to weep,
When death thus closed them with his seal.

'Oh! take a mourning mother's kiss,
Impress'd upon thy forehead fair:
Ah! why those tears? for thou'rt in bliss,
While we in sorrow linger here.'

"Sure, there is something in real sorrow that touches us all; but when it is borne as poor Mary bears it, one feels that God gives us such examples to teach us how we ought to bear the troubles *He* sends us. I hope the lesson won't be lost on me, for sure it is one that would touch a heart of stone. And there is poor Mary in that darkened room, the empty cradle before that held her dead child, and her sick boy, with his poor burning brow, and *he* that ought to be near to comfort her, locked up in a prison—and all this misery is within a few steps of me; and here is the brilliant sun going to his bed, and drawing his bright crimson curtains around him, just as if he had not looked down on grief and sorrow this day. How many hearts have ached and eyes wept, since that sun arose this morning! and there he is, going to sleep with as much splendor as if all below here was happy. Sure, it isn't natural; I'd like to see him look a little gloomy, with dark clouds about him, instead of all those gold and crimson ones, so that one might think he felt a little of the troubles of us poor creatures; and I don't like to

hear all the birds singing so gaily, and to see every thing looking so beautiful, when poor Mary has such a heavy heart, and her innocent babe is just laid in the grave. But, sure, I'm a fool to have such thoughts, just as if the sun, who passes over such hundreds, ay, and thousands of people too, can mind *us;* or as if the birds are sensible of our troubles; but still it does seem unnatural to see every thing in nature smiling when our hearts are sinking."

When Grace entered the cottage, she found Jim impatiently expecting her. "I thought you'd never come home, Grace," said he; "and the house looked so quare and so dismal without you, that I was quite lonesome."

"I'm glad you missed me, Jim dear," said Grace, "and I never felt more contented to see you. Sure, I've been thinking how thankful I ought to be to God, to have you safe by my side, and myself too in good health, God be praised! when I don't desarve such blessings half so much as poor Mary Mahoney. Och! Jim, it is she that bears her troubles. May *He* who gave them, lighten them, and send poor Patrick safe out of prison, to be a comfort to her! And now, dear Jim, that my heart is full with all I've seen and felt the last few hours, let us both kneel down, and return thanks for all the mercies we have enjoyed, and the sorrows that have been spared us,"

The earnestness of Grace's manner, and the description she had given him of Mary Mahoney's sufferings and resignation, touched the naturally good heart of Jim. They knelt and offered up their prayers, with hearts penetrated with thankfulness, and retired to sleep with more tranquil feelings than either had known for some time, and determined to set out to visit poor Patrick in prison next morning.

When Grace and Jim had finished their morning's repast, they made up a store of such provisions as they thought would be acceptable to the poor prisoner, and then pursued their way to Dungarvan. It was a lovely morning, and all nature seemed rejoicing. Birds carolled on every branch, and butterflies sported in the air, "like winged flowers." The dew still sparkled on the leaves, and the atmosphere was redolent with the perfume of the wild-flowers, growing in abundance on every side.

They were leaving this bright and beautiful scene to enter the gloomy walls of a prison, to comfort him, who was debarred from this pleasant sight, and who was kept away from his suffering wife and child. They both felt this, and while it rendered them serious, it increased their tenderness to each other. Jim was more like the Jim of former days, than he had been for many months, and Grace had more hopes of his amendment.

"I feel, Jim dear," said Grace, while they pursued their route, "that my heart has been lighter since we knelt down and prayed together last night, than it has been for months. Oh! if you knew the bitterness of feeling that while the lips are addressing God, the heart is beating for *one* that seems to forget Him! Many's the time I've got up from my knees, fearful of offending with lip-prayers, when my whole soul has been with you; and, oh! the frightful thoughts that have come into my mind. I used to imagine, Jim, that if by prayers and good works I could merit Heaven, what a terrible thing it would be for me to be there without you; and the idea of our being separated in the next world was so fearful to me, that I have been afraid to pray. But then I considered in myself, and I came to the resolution to do all the good I could, and always to pray for you; and since then my mind has been easier, and I find I can give my whole thoughts to the prayers when they are offered for you; whereas, when I prayed for myself, my thoughts were going after you. Jim, how completely a poor woman's happiness here and hereafter depends on her husband! God forgive me, for I know it's a terrible sin and weakness, but I'd lose the courage to pray if I thought you and I would not be united in the next world. So you see a man has a double sin to answer for when he neglects his religion, for he risks his own soul, and his poor wife's too."

"Well, Grace, I give you my hand and word that, with the blessing of God, I'll never miss joining with you in prayers for the future, for what you've just tould me shows your own fond loving heart so plain, that I'd be a brute if I could let you have such thoughts when I may prevent 'em by doing my duty. Sure, Grace, there's something in a good woman that's holy and purifying, and if all women were like you and Mary Mahoney, the world would be better. The only wonder is, how poor Patrick and I could ever be such weak fools as to vex ye day after day. God forgive us for our neglect, and keep us from doing the like again! It's a quare thing, Grace, but so it is, that whenever you spake to me from your head, that is, when you spake plain raison to me, I don't mind it a bit; but when you spake to me from your

heart, I'm ready to do any thing you ask me, for *my* heart understands yours just as if they were twins—but the heads don't agree at all; so when you want to get good of me, don't spake from the head, for I'm no great hand at raisoning, and am very contrairy likewise, but the heart is right after all, and besides, Grace, that's your own, so you may do as you like with it."

Jim and Grace arrived at Dungarvan, and sought the prison, where, after some hesitation, they were admitted, and allowed to see the poor prisoner.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

False friends will seek you in a happy home;
But true friends only to a prison come.
*Old Play.*

After passing through various corridors, attended by the turnkey, whose services they retained by a present, they arrived at the door of the cell in which Patrick Mahoney was confined.

"Well," exclaimed Grace, "what an immense place the gaol is, and what thick walls and gloomy passages! Sure it's a curious thing, if the country is so poor as people say, that they can afford to build such large strong prisons; maybe half what it cost to build it would keep more than half the prisoners out of it. Sure it's a sign they must have great call for 'em; and, you see, it would make ten of the parish church."

These reflections were uttered to Jim while they passed through the corridors; but when, arrived at the door, Grace saw the turnkey fit in the ponderous key to the lock, and remove the chain that crossed the door, the sound grated harshly on her ear, and she involuntarily shuddered.

"Here are some friends come to visit you, Mahoney," said the turnkey. "The ould saying goes, that people don't like to see friends in distress, and that's the raison they never come to 'em in prison; but I'm sure the two that's come to see you, are friends, and real friends too; so I'll leave you together." And, pushing them in, he closed the door; and they heard him bolt and lock it again on the outside.

Patrick Mahoney was sitting on the side of his wretched bed, the only piece of furniture in the cell that could serve as a substitute for a chair. He laid down the book he had been reading, and advanced to meet Grace and Jim. He was pale and haggard with a care-worn aspect, as if he had been months, instead of only a few days, the inmate of a prison. He was unshaved, and his dark beard made his haggard paleness appear still more striking.

"Neighbors," said he, embracing them both, "this is a dismal place you behold me in, and it's only kind and constant friends like yourselves that would come here. Have you seen my poor woman, Grace Cassidy?" continued he, a tear starting to his eye as he spoke; "and my poor boy, that was ill in the fever, when they tore me away from 'em. As for Mary she always thries to make light of her own sufferings; and when I got frightened at seeing the terrible paleness that came over her face, and the twitching about her mouth, when they were dragging me away sure she cried out to me that she was not ill at all, and that it was only a stitch in her chest, that was gone in a minute.—Her face, just as she looked that moment, is always before my eyes, and I have not the courage of a mouse to bear up against all the frightful thoughts that keep coming into my head about her."

Grace broke to him the real state of his wife and child, and the death of the infant, with all the kind and consolatory expressions she could use, and delivered the messages of poor Mary; but nothing could soften the bitterness of Patrick Mahoney's grief, as he felt that *he* had brought all those troubles on his wife. Tears chased each other down his cheeks, and he accused himself with vehemence of having caused the death of his infant, and probably that of his wife and son.

"Oh! Grace Cassidy," said he, in answer to Grace's attempts at consoling him, "it's no use talking; sure I know and feel that I'm the cause of it all. Has not that blessed creature, for blessed she is, been advising me for months and months not to go against my landlord, and not to be attending the meetings or following the Repalers? and she warned me of all that would happen; but I, like a brute and a fool, wouldn't listen to her, though I beheld her getting paler and thinner every day, and you see how her words are come thrue! There she is, in her solitary cabin, on the bed of sickness and sorrow, to which my folly has brought her; and I locked up here without being able to go and nurse her, and half-maddened by the dismal thoughts that comes into my head continually."

Fresh bursts of tears and sobs followed each exclamation of Patrick, which were shared by his two friends, who left no means untried to comfort the afflicted and

heart broken man. Grace assured him that she would go and see Mary every day, and that she would want for nothing; that they would take back cooling draughts for the child, and whatever the doctor thought would be best for Mary; but that unless they could tell her that they left Patrick resigned to the will of God, no medicine would do her good: and this argument had more influence on Patrick than all the others.

He dried his eyes, and said to Grace, "Och! I never was desarving of Mary. Never did she give me a cross word or a sour look, though many's the time I desarved both; and whenever throuble came on us, and mostly always of my bringing on she bore it so patiently, and was always only thinking how she should comfort me, and never remembering herself. Only once she spoke of herself, and how often her words come into my mind since I have been here! 'Patrick dear,' said she, 'I could bear any thing; but to have you taken away from me, to see violent hands laid upon you, oh! I'm afraid it would kill me! and then I know your good heart would make you be always blaming yourself, and even in death this would throuble me.' Yet after all this good advice, I went on, without minding it.

"Och! Grace," continued the poor man, after a pause, "when will the terrible effects of my folly and bad conduct be over? I am committed here on the suspicion of a murder, a suspicion that never could have fallen on me had I not been known to keep irregular and improper hours; and now I have murdered my own child, and am killing its mother, by that most cruel death, a breaking heart. Good as Mary is, and sure such goodness was never surpassed on earth, how can she ever look at me without thinking that I caused the loss of the child that we both looked forward to as a new tie to bind us to each other? How can I comfort her for the throuble I've brought on her? and when she thinks of her baby, and often will she think of it, won't the thought be mixed with the cause of its death?—I am that cause."

Grace said all that kindness and pity could prompt to console the sorrow and lighten the remorse of Patrick, and left him not until she had succeeded in reconciling him to himself.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

Adversity, 'tis thine to prove
The truth of friendship, or of love;
Thy frown can send the false away,
But makes the faithful nearer stay;
Thy chilling breath illusion rends,
And is too cold for summer friends.
*Old Fable.*

The meeting between Colonel Forrester and his party with Lord and Lady Oriel, was marked by the most affectionate cordiality; the pale cheek, chastened expression of countenance, and timid manner of Lady Oriel increased the tenderness of her brother, and the deep interest she excited in the rest of his new family. Mrs. Forrester and she became friends and sisters in heart, and perhaps it would be difficult to find two women so calculated to understand and appreciate each other. Young, handsome, and highly accomplished, married to men to whom they were fondly attached, and without any of the pretensions or rivalry that in general clouds the friendship of women so much as to render it apocryphal, they quickly formed an attachment that promised to be as durable, as it was sincere.

The whole party soon felt as much at home with each other, as if they had been acquainted all their lives. Mr. Desmond accompanied Lord Oriel over his farms, and witnessed the improvements in progress; and Mrs. Desmond drove or walked out with Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester in the beautiful park or its environs. The evenings were passed in cheerful conversation, enlivened by music, and the hours flew with a rapidity only known to those with highly cultivated minds, and in congenial society.

It was evident that the arrival of the party had produced the happiest effects on the master and mistress of Oriel Park. Lord Oriel, in witnessing the cordiality and admiration evinced by the mother and daughter towards his wife, gained more confidence, and was enabled to look forward to her future position with less dread. Morning calls from all the distinguished families in the neighborhood poured in on them; and the presence of two such irreproachable women as Mrs. Desmond and Mrs. Forrester, failed not to have a great weight in re-establishing Lady Oriel in her former position. Colonel Forrester suggested to his sister the propriety of her giving frequent dinners; and a splendid ball, to which all the ball-going people in the vicinity were invited, was as numer-

ously attended as any fete Lady Oriel had ever given in former days.

At the first commencement of this series of entertainments, Lord Oriel betrayed a nervous anxiety, as if he doubted their success; and the manner of Lady Oriel showed a timidity that denoted she no longer felt certain, as formerly, that she could not fail to please. Colonel Forrester observed this apprehension, and, with his knowledge of the world, felt and declared that all such indications of a consciousness of having been placed in a false position, must be subdued, and an air of unembarrassed ease and cheerfulness assumed.

"But, my dearest brother." said Lady Oriel, "I feel so alarmed, knowing the frightful things that were said and believed of me, that though innocent, I am always afraid of observing some incivility or slight in the persons who approach me; and when they are kind, I am so grateful, and think their conduct so good-natured, that I can scarcely conceal what is passing in my mind, or preserve the same ease of manner, as in past times.

"I can understand your discomfort, dear Louisa," replied Colonel Forrester; "and, with your delicacy and sensitiveness, it is but natural you should feel as you do. But, believe me, the world will always remember the reports in question still more, by your exposition of any consciousness of their ever having existed. Receive, with dignified equanimity, the respect and attention due to your station, and which you feel you have not really forfeited, however appearances may have been against you. But beware of showing either timidity or gratitude, or you will be oftener compelled to suffer from the first, than to have cause for the second."

Each week brought an increase of visitors to Oriel Park, and its susceptible master no longer had cause to be nervous about the reception of his wife, in his own county at least. Lady Oriel rejoiced, for *his* sake much more than for her own, in having recovered her place in society; for the great world, or rather the circles of fashion that compose it, had lost all charms for her, from the moment she had experienced its frowns, and she only wished her husband could be as independent of it as she was. She felt that a happy home, with a few chosen friends, like those at present around her, was preferable to all the gaiety and splendor of a London life; and she ceased to value the admiration she had hitherto so much desired to excite.

Every trial with which we are visited in life, however severely it may be felt at the time, brings with it a corrective for some error—correctives, that, alas! all of us but too much require. Lady Oriel had suffered severely, and was chastened, but not soured, by the lesson she had received. In ceasing to seek admiration, she had learned to merit esteem; and if she became a less fascinating, she became a more estimable woman.

If, a few days before the arrival of her brother and his party, any one had told Lady Oriel how advantageous its results would be in assisting her to regain her place in society, she would have doubted, or at least have not believed, the extent and the rapidity with which this object would be accomplished; the anticipation would have appeared too flattering to her hopes.

But now that it was achieved, was she as happy as might be expected? Alas! no; experience had taught her the little value to be attached to the occupations and amusements that had hitherto filled up her time, and had also laid open to her the undue importance her husband placed on that fickle and hollow circle, denominated, *par excellence*, the fashionable world. She saw that on this foundation of sand, Lord Oriel was still disposed to build his and her happiness; and she felt grieved that he could not, like her, choose a more solid foundation. Loving her husband as she now did, even with more tenderness that ever, this want of sympathy was mortifying to her; and she trembled as she reflected, that not on her future conduct, but on her reception by the fashionable world in London, would the tranquillity of her husband solely depend.

"Could we change situations," said Lady Oriel to herself, "and that *he*, without a crime, had been censured and condemned by the world, should I refer to that world for peace of mind? No, once assured of his honor, and possessing his undivided affection, I would abandon the circle which had doubted him, and proudly confine myself to the narrow one of chosen friends, who knew how to estimate him."

The quickness of perception of Lady Oriel had led her to detect every symptom of the thoughts and feelings of her husband; and her heart sickened when she observed his nervous anxiety to ascertain the effect her presence produced in the society around them. To a woman of a proud and delicate mind, nothing is more humiliating than

to observe in a husband the semblance of an appeal to the opinions of others in the estimation he forms of his happiness, or of the sources of it. She wished Lord Oriel to be happy, without any reference to the uncertain criterion of fashionable award; and she was jealously alive to the conviction, now forced on her mind, that never would *he* be happy unless he saw her reinstated in the same brilliant position she had formerly held, and which her pride shrank from ever again stooping to seek, while her feelings yet rankled under the indignity she had experienced.

The agreeable manners and excellent qualities of the Desmonds and Forresters rendered them universally beloved and respected by all the visiting circle in the vicinity of Oriel Park. They were so cordially pressed to prolong their visit, that they consented to remain until March, when Lord and Lady Oriel intended to go to London for the season, and Mr. and Mrs. Desmond decided on opening their splendid mansion on an extensive scale of hospitality, for the alleged purpose of making their son-in-law personally acquainted with the large circle of their acquaintance, but really much more with the intention of establishing Lady Oriel in that circle. The delicate tact of Mrs. Desmond had prevented her ever touching on the subject; but Colonel Forrester, who was in the secret, observing the alarm and timidity with which his sister contemplated her return to London, acquainted her with the project of Mrs. Desmond, and assured her that, from the influence and popularity of that lady, it was certain of being crowned with success.

How grateful did Lady Oriel feel for such true, such rare proofs of friendship; and how did she thank her brother, to whom she felt she owed it, while he disclaimed all thanks by saying—"I cannot allow you, my dearest Louisa, to think you owe the affectionate friendship of my wife and her mother to me; you are only indebted to me for the acquaintance. Your own merits alone have secured you their love, and as they are as sincere as they are warm in their attachments, you may calculate on them for life. There is this difference between them and the persons who compose the fashionable world, that no evil rumor could be for a moment credited by the first, and there is no extent of evil to which the credulity of the last will not lend a willing ear. Such is the difference between true friends and worldly ones, between good people and people of fashion, and from the simple reason that each judges from self."

Lady Oriel conducted her amiable friends to the cottages that were scattered in the vicinity of Oriel Park, where her presence never failed to dispense gladness; and when Mrs. Desmond and her daughter saw the cleanliness and comfort that pervaded the domestic economy of these humble dwellings, where good order, and a scrupulous attention to neatness, marked the habits of their inhabitants, they sighed at the contrast offered to them in the cottages round Springmount, which, with the exception of that of Grace Cassidy and Mary Mahoney presented melancholy proofs of the often repeated fact, that Ireland is a century behind England in civilisation.

Encouragement had not been wanting on the parts of Mrs. Desmond and her daughter, to induce the lower orders in their neighborhood to adopt the improvements and comforts common to the English peasantry. At their own expense they had chimneys built, instead of the old mode of a hole, with a parapet of dried mud round it, to let out the smoke; and they had glazed windows made to open, to supply the place of the small square of bull's-eye glass, that admitted but little light, and no air. They had brick floors, instead of the unequal mud ones, half filled with lodgments of water, and the roofs were ceiled to keep out the vermin, and prevent their being, as heretofore, the receptacles of typhus, the vapors of which had lodged in the unceiled thatch. These improvements had been effected with considerable expense to the excellent owners of Springmount, but had failed, except in a few instances, to answer the desired end—of giving the peasantry a taste for comfort and cleanliness.

"Sure, the chimney carries off all the hate of the fire with the smoke," said old Madge Casey, "and the cabin isn't half so warm as it used to be; and them thin plaguy windows let's in so much light, that if there is a speck of dirt, they shows it; besides, they're so aisily broken, and then the misthress and the young lady are vexed if we fill up the broken pane with a wisp of straw or ould rags, as we used to do with the ould windows. The floor, too, is so hard to the feet, and must be claned continually; and as for the roof, sure, it's as could as ice, and as white and shining toe, and keeps none of the hate in, as you may see by its having none of the marks of the smoke on it. Och! it's not

to be compared to the elegant roofs we had before, with the sticks across for the hens to roost in; and sure it was so comfortable to have all the cocks and hens over our heads, crowing and fighting, and the pigs rouling on the floor, and muddling in the lochs of water running here and there between our legs, and putting their snouts into the iron-pots, just as if they were their own trouffs, and that they knew they had the best right to 'em, as sure they certainly had, for they were the rale rint payers. But now every thing is changed, and they want to make us English, which they never can do, barring we're born over again; and sure it's a pity they won't let us be comfortable in our own way. Sure, them English must work like galley slaves, or niggers, merely to keep the house clane; and what fools they must be to be thinking of the comforts of the house, as if it was a Christian, instead of thinking of their own. I dare say the ladies did it all for the best; but we've never had a bit of pace or comfort since we took to their English ways; and as for the poor pigs, sure they're so lonesome and low-spirited since they're kept in their styes, instead of having the run of the house, that it's dismal to hear the moaning and grunting of 'em. The poor cocks and hens, too, are quite on the shockarone; and the young ducks and goslings, that used to be so happy, swimming in the little ponds of muddy water in the floor, are now straying about as if they didn't know what to do with themselves. Och! it's a dismal thing to see a family scattered about in such a manner, that used to be all happy and comfortable under the same roof, fattening and thriving together on the same victual, and, as a body might say, having but the same bed and the same board. God forgive them that's the cause of all this changement, for I'm sure they meant it for the best."

Madge Casey spoke the sentiments of the greates part, if not the whole, of the old peasantry round Springmount. They could not habituate themselves to the changes, which they were loth to consider improvements in their dwellings.

"I don't like their newfangled alterations," said Molly Macguire; "sure, it isn't natural that we should be following fashions that those that were here before us never dreamt of. I loved my poor father and mother that's gone to their long home, and I like to remember them sitting one at each side of the chimney corner, their toes almost in the ashes, their heads resting on their knees, and their short dudeens* in the corners of their mouths, as comfortable as two poor creathures could be; the house so gay with pigs, ducks, and geese, running about the floor, grunting, quacking, and squalling; cocks and hens crowing over their heads so lively; and the gossoons so happy, tormenting the cat and dog, and baiting their little sisters; sure it was a pleasant sight, and the ould couple seemed to enjoy it! I could sit down and remember this, till it seemed to be all before my eyes. But now every thing is so changed, that I can't for the life of myself bring 'em back to me, and this bothers me, and puts dismal thoughts into my head; for I seem to be an unnatural child to my poor parents that's dead and gone, God rest their souls! to turn their fine flouchoolaugh† cabin topsy-turvy into an English cottage, as they call it; so that, if they were to come back some night (and sure there's nothing to hinder 'em, as many's the spirits have done before), 'twould drive 'em stark mad to see how every thing is changed, and that their unnatural children wouldn't be contint with what was good enough for them. Och, agrah! when one has lost those that were near and dear to one, it seems so natural to keep every thing the same as it was before they went; for then it seems as if they were not gone quite entirely, and one can bring 'em before one's eyes just as they used to be."

Mrs. Desmond and her daughter saw with disappointment that the improvements they had made had not increased the comfort of the persons they were intended to benefit; and their efforts to ameliorate the condition of a people whose prejudices and habits opposed a powerful obstacle to their benevolent endeavors, were, though not altogether abandoned, greatly discouraged.

Grace Cassidy and Mary Mahony profited by the countenance and support which they received. Their cottages were as clean and tidily kept as in England, their gardens as redolent of flowers, and there was even a spirit of coquetry in the care bestowed in the decoration, particularly by Grace, who, having no children to occupy her time, had more leisure than Mary. The fresh nosegays ranged on the dresser as white as unsunned snow, and on which a goodly show of pewter and delf was set out; the brick floor, cleanly swept, and as

* Short pipes.
† Irish for hospitable.

red as a cherry; the windows rubbed bright; and all the rustic furniture shining from the efforts of Grace's hands—all showed the tasteful care, as well as cleanly habits of the tidy housewife; and her person was as well attended to as her house.

The old neighbors found out that "sure and troth Grace Cassidy was full of conceit, to have her kitchen as illigant as the parlor in genteel houses, and her garden full of roses and other fine plants, just as if it was a gentleman's garden. Sure, poor people didn't want flowers; they were only fit to divart the rich, who had nothing else to do with their money, or their time; but faith the pride of some people was mighty great, to be setting up for such grandeur!"

Thus, what ought to have insured Grace the approval of her neighbors, excited only their enmity, as they considered *her* habits a reproach to their own. This feeling was increased by their jealousy at seeing the plain, solid eight-day clock, brass warming-pan, gridiron, and frying-pan, that were presented to her by Mr. Forrester, in order that her Irish cottage should have all the appendages of an English one; and they were heard to say, that "sure there would be no living with Grace, now that she was setting herself up as a lady with her clock instead of an hour-glass."

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"We may consider ourselves fortunate when we can acquire wisdom by seeing the consequences of error illustrated in the persons of others, instead of in our own."

Every word which Patrick said, touched a chord that vibrated in the heart of Jim, and all the reflections and advice of Grace failed to produce an equal effect on his mind. Example is always more convincing than precept, and this was never more exemplified than in the altered tone of feelings with which Jim Cassidy returned to his home. Both husband and wife deeply sympathised with the poor prisoner they had left, and the serene aspect of nature and the pure freshness of the air seemed, from the contrast of the heavy atmosphere and gloomy cell in which they had spent the last two hours, to be still more delightful.

"When will poor Patrick be at liberty to enjoy all that is now refreshing us?" said Jim. "Och! Grace ma-vourneen, when I think that I might have been there in his place, and have seen you shut out from *me* as we were from *him*, sure it makes the heart sink within me."

"But you forget, Jim dear," replied Grace, "that I being your wife, should have a right to stay with you where ever you were, and therefore I'd be with you in that gloomy, narrow cell, for I have no child to keep me at home away from my husband. If poor Mary had no children she would be with Patrick; and then he would not be so miserable, nor she neither."

"That's just like your own womanly heart, to think so," said Jim; "but you don't know the heart of man, ma-colleen: we are proud and obstinate: we are like the oaks of the forest, that stand in pride to resist the storm, and refuse to bend to it, till it strikes us to the earth: but ye are like the delicate shrubs that yield to every breeze, and bend with it, so that ye are not destroyed as we are. If Mary was in that wretched hole of a cell, she would be content because she was near *him*, and doing her duty; but *he* would always be noticing the want of comfort around her, and dwelling on the disgrace of having brought her there, with the bitter thought that it was by *not* discharging *his* duty that they were both there: so unhappy as he is away from her, I think he would be more unhappy to have her there. Then, Grace, every man has a pride for his wife and though he can bear up against the affronts he has brought on himself, he couldn't bear to see her with turnkeys and bad people about her. A woman that's what a woman should be, is as misplaced in a prison as a beautiful fresh nosegay, the sight of which only makes one low-spirited, by reminding one of *where* it came from, and where it ought to be. One would like to keep the wife and the flowers for our own home."

"Yes, Jim dear, I can understand a man's thinking thus, but a woman never deems herself out of her place when she is comforting her husband. Sure, the very words, the holy words of marriage, says, they are never to forsake each other in sickness or in health, in riches or in poverty, and much more in sorrow ought they to be together; but men are too apt, Jim dear, to treat women as flowers, that are for sunshine and happiness, instead of being charms in gloom and trouble; whereas we are never so much at home as in comforting the afflicted, and making those we love forget the cares and vexations that fall on all."

About this period news arrived that Donnelly, who had fled for the murder of the policeman, had fallen a victim to a drunken quarrel with some of his reckless associates, and his aged father and mother, whose sole support he was, were now plunged in grief, with no consolation left them, but that, had he been arrested by the police, his life would have paid the penalty of his crime, with all the ignominy attached to such a death; and from this additional misery, his scarcely less disgraceful, though less publicly disgraceful, death had saved them. Their poor neighbors flocked round to comfort them; and the worthy rector, Mr. Disnay, afforded them ample assistance.

The unhappy parents, while receiving the generous stipend of Mr. Disnay, administered with no sparing hand, remembered with bitterness, that their unfortunate and guilty son had been one of the most active of the ringleaders in opposing the payment of tithes, and acknowledged how admirable was the creed of that religion which repays injuries with benefits.—"Och! Mich," said the poor old woman to her husband, "isn't it a fine thing and a wonderful thing too, to see Parson Disnay, and all his family, showing such favor to us after all the harm and mischief our poor boy that's dead and gone did to them and theirs! Well, God rest his soul and forgive him his sins! sure he'd be now alive if he hadn't followed bad advisers; and it's only the good pattern that Parson Disnay sets us, in forgiving all our poor boy did against him, that keeps me from going down on my knees to give my ten thousand curses to them Repalers that led our child astray."

Forgiveness acts as a salve to the wounds inflicted by unkindness, while revenge or rancor but serves to keep them unhealed. The Irish have not been taught to practise this virtue (for a virtue it positively is, and for its perfection requiring many others;) but, unfortunately, their passions quick to be excited and as quick to be appeased, have ever been encouraged to keep alive the spirit of vengeance, as something praiseworthy; while forgiveness they are taught to consider as a proof of a mean spirit and a dastardly nature. So little were the poor and ignorant peasantry capable of appreciating the conduct of Mr. Disnay and his curate, that the instances of their forgiveness of injuries, and repayment of evil with good, were sometimes reputed as indications of their cowardice, meanness, or cunning, or all three united; and this opinion was entertained by a people eminently calculated by nature not only to appreciate, but to practise the virtue they decried. It has been truly said, that "happiness is but opinion;" but, alas! we see examples constantly brought before us that virtue is equally a matter of convention; and the sister-country proves, that from ignorance and superstition, two giant fiends, beneath whose shadow all goodness becomes blighted, that which is most admirable in religion and morals may, even in the nineteenth century, be as undervalued as it is misunderstood.

In holding up Mr. Disnay and his curate as examples of the advantage to be derived to parishioners from seeing before them men whose lives accord with their professions, we would not have it imagined that good clergymen are wholly confinee to the established church. We have known many excellent and worthy priests of the Roman Catholic religion; but many of their tenets precluded the possibility of their being equally serviceable to their flock; and above all, the Divine precept of "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," was never sufficiently inculcated or acted upon, to enable them to subdue the angry feelings or violent actions of their inflammable flocks.

It augurs ill for any religion, when the persons who profess it act in open violation of its dictates. Murder, violence, and rapine, speak little in favor of the manner in which the powerful influence, supposed to be held by the Roman Catholic priests over their flocks, is wielded; and the constant repetition of such atrocities must dispose all reasonable people to conclude, either that the priests have no power —the most charitable conclusion, or that the country where such outrages stain the national character, must have less religion than any other country on the face of the globe; or, lastly, that the religion professed by the majority in Ireland, is totally powerless in influencing their conduct or feelings—the chief and grand motive of all religion. We are told, and the statement is borne out by the accounts which every week reach us, that the priests are but as the tools of him who rules Ireland; whose sceptre is a firebrand, never waved but for destruction, and the ignition of the passions of his deluded followers.

What can be thought of ministers of the Gospel, sent to preach peace and good will on earth, who lend themselves to the furtherance of bloodshed, the violation of all

laws, and the plans of those who oppose themselves to the legitimate rulers of the land, tracking the path of rebellion by the blood of their victims? Let us in charity hope that the priests are powerless, that they only yield obedience to the reign of terror they cannot resist, and that when the strong and mighty arm of the law shall have quelled the anarchy which has so long deluged Ireland in crime, they will show that what has appeared to be guilt, was only weakness, and lend their assistance to soothe angry feelings, and re-establish peace and good order. Let them, by their conduct, prove that the Roman Catholic religion never tolerates crime, whatever may be its object; and we will be one of the first to render them justice.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

"Are we not join'd by Heav'n?
Each interwoven with the other's fate?
Are we not mix'd like streams of meeting rivers,
Whose blended waters are no more distinguish'd,
But roll into the sea one common flood?"

"Domestic happiness, the only bliss
Of Paradise that has survived the fall!"

Each day since their union had served to render Colonel Forrester and his wife more tenderly attached to each other; a great similarity of tastes joined to excellent tempers, kept them in perpetual harmony, and the undeviating affection with which Colonel Forrester attended to the comforts of Mr. and Mrs. Desmond, was a new bond of union between him and his excellent wife. She repaid it by the warmth with which she attached herself to his sister, Lady Oriel, and the sweetness with which she soothed the occasional moodiness of her Lord. No day passed in which the Desmonds did not congratulate themselves on the son-in-law whom Providence had given them; and as they marked the happiness of their daughter, how did they rejoice in her choice, and in their ready acquiescence in it.

Mrs. Forrester was now as ladies wish to be who love their lords; and this circumstance seemed to complete the happiness of the whole family. "How I hope it will be a son!" said Mrs. Desmond, "that it may be named after you," laying her hand on that of her husband; "it would give me such happiness to see another Walter Desmond as the future master of Springmount."

"But, my dear," replied Mr. Desmond, "Forrester's is as ancient a name as ours, and it would be ungracious to accept this compliment from him, of changing the name of his first-born."

"Well, well," said Mrs. Desmond, "the truth must out, for I cannot keep this, the first secret that was ever between us, any longer. Forrester has told me that his first son is to be Walter Desmond, and that if God grants him a second, he is to be Forrester, with his English estate settled on him. All this he told me very soon after his marriage, but I won't tell you what he said, when he prayed that his first-born might resemble you in every respect, for I should make you too proud."

"The man who was honored by your preference, and blessed by your affection for twenty years, my dearest Louisa, must be already too proud to be spoilt by any other circumstance, however flattering; but I feel deeply sensible of the affectionate delicacy of Forrester, and think we may consider ourselves to have indeed drawn a prize in the lottery of life, in having secured such a protector for our child, and such a companion for ourselves."

The period had now arrived for the departure of the Desmonds and Forresters from Oriel Park for London, and they set out with regret from a place where they had passed their time so happily, and formed friendships which they felt would only terminate with their lives. The gentleness, and various powers of pleasing, which Lady Oriel so eminently possessed, had excited an affection in the minds of her guests, which every day's knowledge of her served to increase, and she repaid it with warmth and sincerity. Mrs. Desmond she loved and respected as a mother, and Mrs. Forrester she attached herself to as a sister; and as she had never known either of those precious ties, she yielded to the new feelings of affection which were developed in her sensitive heart, with all the tenderness that formed a part of her nature. In short, the united families presented the rare example of parting with increased regard, after having passed the difficult ordeal of a *séjour* of three months in a country-house, and looked forward with impatience to their meeting in London in a few days.

Had Lady Oriel not been supported by the protecting presence of Mrs. Desmond and Mrs. Forrester, she dared not have contemplated her return to London; and even with their support, she looked forward to it with dread; her self-confidence was gone, and she felt that a look, a whis-

per, or a cold reception, had power to overwhelm her with confusion and dismay. The conduct of the unfeeling Lady Borrodaile at Keswick, had sunk deep in her mind, was often reflected upon, and never without bitterness, not towards the obtuse and ill-bred matron, but towards herself, for having so far forgotten her dignity as to have placed herself in a situation to be exposed to the rudeness of such a person. Had Lady Oriel known the motives of Lady Borrodaile's conduct, she would have smiled in pity at what had pained her, for the impertinence of that lady had proceeded solely from jealousy and envy, at seeing her daughter overlooked whenever she was in the same society with Lady Oriel; a circumstance that excited in the mind of the mother, a dislike to the fair and innocent cause, and which she seized the first opportunity that offered for displaying.

Had Lady Oriel known that this female dragon of virtue, who pulled her daughter away from a contact with a suspected woman, was in the constant habit of bringing her in close intimacy with women relative to whose reputations suspicion had long been exchanged for certainty, she would not have judged herself so severely as she had done. But, with the delicate susceptibility of a pure and proud mind, she was more disposed to think favorably of the motives of others, than to find excuses for herself. Lady Oriel had yet to learn, that severity towards the errors, real, or supposed, of others, rarely proceeds from a love of virtue or detestation of vice, but are the modes in which jealousy and envy delight to avenge themselves for mortifications, of which, perhaps, she whose beauty or talents excite them, is the only person unconscious. An error in conduct may be overlooked, provided the sinner is neither young, beautiful, nor clever, the qualities which, alas! most frequently lead to error, by exciting the admiration that prompts women to listen to the tempter; but if she be handsome, or clever, or worse—both, then must she expect no mercy from her own sex, and make up her mind to console herself with the occupation which talents never fail to give to those who cultivate them, and which always "prove their own exceeding great reward."

There are situations in life in which, because the evil qualities of our natures are not called into action, we believe we have them not; and others, when, because the good qualities lie dormant, or are chilled by unpropitious circumstances, we imagine they do not exist. Alas! human nature is a web of mingled yarn, where good and evil are so closely woven together that it is difficult to separate them; one is sometimes more visible than the other, but both are to be found in all, the degrees differing only in proportion to the excitement they find.

Without the unfortunate dilemma in which Lady Oriel's imprudence had placed her husband and herself, the defects of Lord Oriel had probably never been observed, for it was this circumstance that encouraged their growth. He had now become so dependent on worldly opinion for happiness, that he lost much of the native dignity of his character; and Lady Oriel saw this defect with sorrow and self-reproach, attributing it to her own fatal imprudence. They left Oriel Park a few days after the Desmonds and Forresters had proceeded to London, and both entered town once more, with mutual fears for the future and painful retrospections of the past.

The Morning Post announced the arrival of the Earl and Countess of Oriel in Grosvenor Square; and the same paper, among the fashionable parties for the week, announced a grand dinner for Wednesday at the splendid mansion of Mr. and Mrs. Desmond, and a ball for Friday, to which all the *élite* of fashion in London were invited. Lady Oriel found invitations for both; and her brother, a few hours after her arrival, came to urge the necessity of her appearing at them.

The dinner-party consisted of the Duke and Duchess of Heaviland, the Marquess and Marchioness of Bowood, the Earl and Countess of Grandison, and two or three distinguished members of the House of Commons. The party had been arranged with a view to introducing Lady Oriel into the circle to which Mrs. Desmond was most anxious she should belong—a circle wherein the aristocracy of reputation was considered to be *versus* that of fashionable exclusiveness—the one in which she had hitherto figured.

Lady Oriel could not resist casting a glance at her husband, when Mrs. Desmond presented her to the Duchess of Heaviland, the only lady there with whom she was not acquainted, though her acquaintance with the others were but slight; and she observed that he anxiously watched her reception by a lady who was considered so scrupulous as to female propriety as the Duchess. The *accueil* was pe-

culiarly gracious, because Mrs. Desmond had spoken highly of Lady Oriel. The evil reports in circulation she had never heard, or, if heard, had forgotten; and, even had they been remembered, her knowledge of Mrs. Desmond's character and principles would have led her to disbelieve them. The other ladies behaved just as they would have done in former days; and after the first ten minutes of nervous embarrassment were over, the marked affection of Mrs. Desmond and Mrs. Forrester, with the manly and dignified bearing of her brother, who being deputed by Mr. Desmond to do the honors *chez lui*, and as host, directed much of his attention to his timid sister, soon placed her at her ease.

In the drawing-room, during the *soirée*, the Duchess expressed her desire to cultivate the acquaintance of Lady Oriel; and a number of other ladies, who came in the evening, renewed with apparent pleasure their former intercourse with her. Lord Oriel observed all this with gratified feelings, and in returning home, remarked what an agreeable day they had spent; a remark that elicited a smile from his wife, who, however satisfied she might feel at the flattering reception she had received on this her first *entré* into fashionable life since she had retired from it, had more than once mentally confessed, that it was the only dull day she had passed in the society of the Desmonds and Forresters.

She had been enjoying such rationally happy evenings during their stay at Oriel Park, that she found it difficult to reconcile herself to the vapid amusements of balls and routs; and she resolved that, if she was fortunate enough to recover her former position in society, so as to satisfy her husband's susceptibility, she would confine herself as much as possible to the domestic circle, where she felt that true happiness could alone be found.

Cards of visits and invitation came pouring in every succeeding day, to all of which Lord Oriel gave an attention very unlike his former indifference. He had become excessively scrupulous as to the reputations of the ladies on his wife's visiting list, and requested her to avoid two or three who were considered *un peu leste*, but who were generally received in society. Lady Oriel ventured to observe, that having suffered herself from the malignity of scandal, she thought it wrong to show more prudery than other ladies towards the persons in question. But he with a sigh answered, that it was this very misfortune that rendered it so much the more necessary for her to be scrupulous; and though she felt the truth of the remark, it wounded her.

## CHAPTER XL.

London, the mart of luxury and pride,
Where wealth the sceptre holds, and gold's the guide
That leads the crowd, while virtue, talent, sense
Must be their own exceeding recompense;
Here scandal finds an ever-willing ear,
And pity seldom stops to drop a tear:
On paper wings the piquant slanders fly,
And sabbath morns see reputations die.
False friends—true foes—alike press on to read
The tale that dooms some victim's heart to bleed.
Here fashion, motley goddess, changing still,
Finds ready subjects to obey her will,
Who laugh at nature and her simple rules,
Because they are not form'd for knaves and fools.
*London, a Satire.*

An invitation to dinner soon followed the visit of the Duchess of Heaviland to Lady Oriel, and this seemed to afford extreme satisfaction to her husband. Heaviland house was considered one of the last strong-holds of aristocratic grandeur that London boasts; the style of the mansion, the extreme richness and solid beauty of the furniture, and the almost feudal splendor kept up in the establishment, might well entitle it to this distinction. It was not more unlike the town mansions of the generality of our nobility, than were its owners.

The Duke of Heaviland was a nobleman of high character, reserved and dignified manners, amiable disposition, and domestic habits. With a true taste for magnificence, he avoided all ostentation; and though his immense fortune and high character gave him great weight, he took little part in public life, and contented himself with discharging the duties of his elevated station with scrupulous exactitude. He had filled the situation of Viceroy, in Ireland, with impartiality and credit; had visited the French court as ambassador extraordinary, and left behind him, in France, a deep impression of the splendor and hospitality of the English nobility, which few were so well calculated to represent with dignity, as the Duke and his amiable Duchess. The Duke's politics were high tory, and had always been so consistent, reasonable, and moderate, as to gain him the respect of all parties.

The Duchess of Heaviland was exactly the wife suited to the Duke, and fitted to fill the high station she held. Sensible, mild, dignified, and perfectly unaffected,

she pursued the even tenor of her way, avoiding all cliques, and confining her society to a select circle, as irreproachable in morals as elevated in rank. No petty competition, no political intrigues, no assumption of leading or driving the world of fashion, ever actuated the Duchess of Heaviland's movements. She stood proudly aloof from the crowd, supporting with dignity "her place of state," respected by all, and beloved by those who had opportunities of knowing her.

It was during her Grace's *séjour* in Ireland, as the representative of female majesty, that Mrs. Desmond's acquaintance with her ripened into a strong and cordial friendship, and had since been maintained by frequent intercourse and correspondence. And it was at the desire of Mrs. Desmond that the Duchess cultivated the acquaintance of Lady Oriel, as hitherto, her Grace had rarely sought any intimacy with the members of the clique, to which Lady Oriel had formerly belonged, from their being, as she observed, too fashionable, and too gay for her sober habits.

The gentleness and decorum of Lady Oriel's manners had strengthened the favorable impression given of her by Mrs. Desmond, and each interview increased the Duchess's admiration and good opinion of her. The Duke and Lord Oriel also had formed an intimacy which brought them often together; and the select and distinguished guests whom the Oriels frequently met at Heaviland House, all sought the acquaintance of Lady Oriel, who, as the constant associate of the Duchess of Heaviland, soon became as *recherchée* in the best society, as even her fastidious Lord could desire. Those who had formerly dropped off from her, now as eagerly sought a renewal of her acquaintance, and she conducted herself so mildly and decorously towards them, that they accused themselves of injustice, in ever having doubted her purity.

This was a triumph to Lord Oriel, and seemed all that was requisite to his happiness; his pride in his wife no longer humiliated, he became cheerful and gay, and a succession of *recherché* dinners, and brilliant *soirées*, once more enlivened his elegant residence in Grosvenor Square.

The Desmonds and Forresters, to whom Lady Oriel owed her reinstatement in society, were delighted beyond measure at witnessing the happiness they caused; and all was sunshine and gaiety in the two families, who never passed a day without meeting, and felt that each interview only rendered them mutually dearer. Colonel Forrester and his Frances made the house of Mr. Desmond so agreeable, that it was quoted as offering the pleasantest society in London; and the worthy pair seemed to grow young in witnessing the happiness of their children.

Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester were at the Opera, and Lord Albany entered their box. "I hope, ladies," said he, "that you are delighted with the ballet of Faust. You must admit that the music is as pretty as it is original; and the March, infernal as it is meant to be, is very fine. I like the Opera better than any other theatrical amusement," continued Lord Albany; "the hour is more suited to one's habits; for really it is *bien genant* to be obliged to swallow one's dinner, and drive off in a state of personal discomfort, to arrive when half the new comedy or tragedy is over, and be told that the most effective scenes have passed. Then the sort of dinners one gets preparatory to a play—I think of them with horror! To dine *dans une bonne maison* the day of a premeditated visit to the theatre, is out of the question; so one is forced to hurry over soup and *cotelettes, à la minute*, at Crockford's, at the risk of burning one's mouth; and drink wine half-iced, denying oneself the gentlemanly comfort of discussing a desert; and then 'to be taken, (as the poetical apothecary's label directs) and well shaken over the *pavé* in a cabriolet, one is out of humor before one arrives, digestion is deranged, comfort destroyed, patience put *hors de combat;* and, consequently, one is little disposed to judge favorably of the entertainment, and one leaves the theatre, vowing that we have now neither dramatic writers nor actors; and all this because we have been *derangé*, and that if we will not change our hours, so they will not change theirs."

"But would it not be a good plan to go to the theatre without dining," asked Lady Oriel, "and sup afterwards? by which means, all the disagreeable effects you have so pathetically deplored would be avoided."

"*Helas! mes dames*," said Lord Albany, "I have tried that plan; but it answers not. From going without dinner, one is apt to make a more substantial supper, and this banishes sleep. The ghosts of the murdered lamb, chicken, &c. sacrificed to our appetites, rise up in judgment against one, presenting even more hideous visions than those which murdered the slumbers of Macbeth."

"How much more you men think of dinners than we do!" said Mrs. Forrester.

"I own that in general we do," replied Lord Albany; "for *la gourmandise* is not a female vice. Still, who can deny that much of our comfort depends on our dinners? and he is therefore wise, who, reflecting that as we must dine three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, resolves to dine well, in order to spare the stomach and its poor dependant, the temper. I never dine with Lord Refton without feeling a happier and, I do believe, a better man for the rest of the evening; 'my bosom's lord sits lightly on its throne,' because the stomach is not weighed down with any 'perilous stuff.' His *plats* are so delicious, so *epuré* from all that is gross, that they can only send light and agreeable vapors to the brain; and this accounts for *his* being always gay, *spirituel*, and amiable."

"I know not if this be the cause," said Lady Oriel, "but I am ready to admit the effect; for Lord Refton is very agreeable and *spirituel*."

"Oh! I do assure your ladyship," replied Lord Albany, "that my theory on this point is irrefutable. Good cooks make agreeable men. Only compare the most gifted conversationist, even Moore himself, after a dinner at Refton's, or in an ordinary house with the same guests, and he would be no longer equally brilliant. I have thought of searching into history, to discover the materials of which were composed the particular repasts eaten by the remarkable men of the last century the day of, or the day previous to, any remarkable action, as I am convinced it would elucidate my system. Only fancy what a load of responsibility would be taken off from poor human nature, by discovering that all our crimes proceeded either from a bad dinner or the want of a dinner, and ascertaining that

> 'When poor fellows go astray,
> Their dinners are the fault—not they.'"

"I must say, you talk *con amore* about dinners," said Lady Oriel; "you would almost persuade one you thought of nothing else."

"*Apropos* to *con amore*, as beauty always is to hearts," replied Lord Albany, "who is that very handsome woman opposite to us? she might make one forget dinner and supper too."

"That lady," said Lady Oriel, looking at her through her glass, "is the wife of our most popular writer, and is remarkably beautiful; features, complexion, expression, all are faultless. Mr. Desmond pointed her out to me the other evening as one of the very few perfect specimens now to be seen of a beauty peculiar to Ireland: hair like the wing of the raven seen with the sun's rays full on it, and skin white as the driven snow, with eyes of Heaven's own blue. The lady comes of an ancient Irish race, and belies not her blood, which sends that mantling rose-tint to her cheeks, 'as if she blushed because she is too fair.'"

"A *mauvaise honte*," added Lord Albany, "that few ladies are guilty of for such a cause! Look into the parterre, and you will see talking together two of the men who have the most succeeded in fiction—Moore the poet and Lord Fableton. Both have made reputations from the exercise of the same power—imagination; but such is the prejudice of society, that while one is admired and followed as a poet, the other is decried and shunned as a——liar. Imagination, which is the Eldorado of the poet and of the novel-writer, often proves the most pernicious gift to the individuals who compose the talkers instead of the writers in society. How strange does it appear to casuists," continued Lord Albany, smiling, "that one man with his plume can soar into the regions of fiction, and gain immortality by a brilliant fable; while another, using his tongue instead of a pen, and adhering to prose instead of verse, becomes stamped with the degrading epithet of a liar, and all from a different use of the same faculty! What a poet would my poor friend Lord Fableton have made, had he turned his inventive powers to good account, instead of being, as at present, considered an emulator of the Baron Munchausen!"

"I was present the other evening," continued Lord Albany, "at the reading of a poem from the pen of a celebrated author. 'What a brilliant imagination! what invention!' was repeated at every side; and albeit unused to the approving mood, I was forced to yield assent to their well merited commendations. I left Grosvenor Square duly impressed with the advantages of imagination, and wishing that I, too, could find a ladder to mount into this palace of gold, and bear away even a little of its dust. With this feeling I entered White's and seated myself, inwardly invoking the aid of imagination, until my invocations were interrupted by the voice of my imaginative friend, Lord Fableton, who related tales and anecdotes which satisfied many

of his hearers that he was in his anecdotage, and stated as facts the bright effusions of his brain. The past, present, and future, were equally and impartially misrepresented, and the poem I had read in the early part of the evening, contained much less invention than his conversation. No sooner had he withdrawn, than the circle he had left, commented most severely on his want of veracity. 'And this,' thought I, 'is the reward of genius, and such is the invidious distinction made between men of equal powers of imagination. One gains immortality by his pen, while the prejudices of society stamp my poor friend as a liar, only for having *spoken* his bright imaginings—he ought to have been a poet.'—The young lady next the Irish beauty is the authoress of 'Romance and Reality,' and of several exquisite poems, full of imagery, and of a fancy that would not have shamed Hafiz himself."

"I have read her novel," said Lady Oriel, "and think it exceedingly clever; the dialogue epigramattic and sparkling, displaying all the freshness and gaiety of youth, with the observation of maturity."

"How very well Lady Elsimore is looking this evening!" said Mrs. Forrester.

"She is very handsome certainly," replied Lady Oriel; "indeed, so are all the family; and I remember being particularly struck, when I saw her and her sister, the late Lady Usridge, for the first time, both fair and with an air so *distingué* and *comme il faut*, each adding to the charm of the other; indeed, I never see the living sister without thinking of the lost one, the beautiful pendant that Nature gave her. Then in the box to the left, is the authoress of 'The Buccaneers,' one of the best novels that has appeared for a long time, full of incident and interest, powerfully sustained and clearly developed."

"When you visit Ireland, dear sister," said Mrs. Forrester, "you will be better able to appreciate the truth and beauty of this lady's Irish Sketches; they are portraits from the life, and full of truth and beauty. The wife of one of my father's tenants, Grace Cassidy, with whom I long to make you acquainted, is just the heroine for the graphic pen of Mrs. Hall, who alone could do her justice."

"Mrs. Desmond has been telling me so much of this pretty peasant, this fourth Grace," said Lady Oriel, "that I already take an interest in her, perhaps not the less because I hear she is as pretty as good."

"Who is that very pretty person opposite to us?" asked Lady Oriel.

"That," said Mrs. Forrester, "is Lady Ridney, who turned the heads of all our Dublin beaux, without ever for a moment losing her own; I never saw a young person so little elated by universal admiration. The lady leaving the box next Lady Ridney's, is the authoress of, what shall I say, half the popular novels of the day, among which there is not a single failure; her books give you all the sparkle of fashionable life, without any of its inanity, and her fecundity of imagination is as extraordinary as her facility of language; she appears never to tire herself, and certainly never tires her readers, for she is always brilliant and often profound.

## CHAPTER XLI.

"The world's all title-page—there's no contents;
The world's all face; the man who shows his heart,
Is hooted for his nudities, and scorned.

"Ce ne sont ni nos lettres ni les sciences qui nuiront jamais à l'energie du caractère. L'eloquence rend plus brave, la bravoure rend plus eloquent; tout ce qui fait battre le cœur pour une idée généreuse double la véritable force de l'homme, sa volonté. Mais l'égoisme systématique, dans lequel on comprend quelquefois sa famille comme un appendice de soi même; mais la philosophie, vulgaire au fond, quelque elégante qu'elle soit dans les formes, qui porte à dédaigner tout ce qu'on appelle des illusions, c'est-à-dire le devouement et l'enthousiasme, voilà le genre de lumière redoutable pour les vertus nationales."

"And so you advise me," said the Duchess of Wellinborough to her Duke, "to continue to visit Lady Oriel."

"Decidedly," said the Duke; "if, as you say, you believe her to be innocent with regard to the scandalous reports in circulation."

"But what will the world say? And if, as I suspect, a party is made against her, my single countenance can do her little good, and may do me much harm."

"My dear Jane, I am shocked to hear sophisms from your lips. The same mode of reasoning has ruined many a woman; because, while each of her friends, if friends such calculators might be called, stood aloof for fear *she* should be the only female ready to do a kind and charitable action, the poor woman has fallen to the deepest depth of the slough of despond, *planté* by those on whom she reckoned in her hours of need; whereas, if each individual had had moral courage, and gone to the rescue of her whom they believed guiltless, they would quickly have found others to follow their example. It is not the

crime, but its consequences, that you all dread. Selfishness has taken the place of all natural feeling; you are willing to be on terms of intimacy in society with those of your own sex, about whose conduct you cannot doubt, because they happen to be received, yet draw off in terror from some you loved, and do not suspect, because scandal has seared what vice could not sully. If you were all ignorant of the misconduct of those you continue to visit, I should hold you blameless; and if you believed the scandal propagated against those you discard, I should consider you conscientious, but not cruel; while, as it is, I think you both, and so thinking, avow that selfishness and gross insensibility have demoralised you all."

"How very harsh you are against the women!" said the Duchess, "as if they only were insensible and selfish."

"Pardon me," said the Duke; "I am willing to admit that the disgusting defects I have named, are even more prevalent among men than women. With us a man dare hardly perform a service, attended even with the semblance of the slightest personal sacrifice, without the risk of being held up to 'the world's dread laugh,' and being pointed at as an enthusiast, *un tête foible*, a man who is the dupe of the designing. All this is very dreadful; for, be assured, when we arrived at the point of considering generosity, disinterestedness and goodness, as proofs of weakness, we are not far from looking on their opposites as praiseworthy. Misfortunes, however unmerited, and error, that existed only in appearance, and never descended to reality, meet with few advocates at present while undoubted guilt, if upheld by circumstances, passes current in society; and all this injustice proceeds alone from selfishness, as people are neither more severe nor malicious than formerly; they are only influenced by the fear of injuring self. This is felt in the senate, in the clubs, in fact, in all places. A charge likely to affect the reputation of any individual, however unfounded or improbable it may be, is sufficient to annul friendships of long duration; and former friends are content with hoping the charges may be untrue, instead of taking pains to prove them so. But *en attendant*, what could they do? They could not act in opposition to the opinion of the world, and, therefore the friend is sacrificed to the only friend of the egotist—self."

"But as we cannot change the world," said the Duchess, "we must submit to it."

"Yes," said the Duke, "on the same principle that you ladies spoil your *femme de chambre*, and having rendered them tyrants, instead of useful servants, submit to the nuisances you have made. Each of you women of a certain rank forms a pillar that supports the artificial edifice, called the world of fashion. The pillars are of marble, substantial, and, alas! cold, as well as polished; but the edifice is but of *gauze diaphané;* all that passes within is detected, as the gauze is too clear to conceal defects, though it shades slight spots; and the pillars are considered, like those that supported the screen at Carlton House in former days, as good columns, but supporting *nothing*."

"How very odd it is," said the Duchess, "that I should have fancied you would have rather approved than disapproved my leaving off Lady Oriel! I suppose then, you will no longer object to my receiving Lady Baskerton."

"*Au contraire*," said the Duke, "I will never consent to it. This is the first error of which Lady Oriel has even been *suspected*. You disbelieve the charge, and so do I; but admitting, for sake of argument, that she was not blameless, it is always charitable to look mildly on a *first fault*, because it prevents the recurrence of many another:—besides,

'To err is human, to forgive divine.'

But when error is repeated, and that as in the case of Lady Baskerton—

'The last lover's welcome as the first,'

there can be no excuse for clemency. She has been warned by the oft-reiterated tales of scandal propagated at her expense, and should either have corrected the reality or the appearance that led to the rumors. You are unspotted in reputation, my dear Jane, and, therefore, can afford to be charitable to the erring or the suspected. This is one of the happy privileges of undoubted virtue, and the worst that can be said or thought is, that the undoubted virtue was naturally undoubting, one of the highest compliments that can be paid to your sex. The defalcation of such women as you, must pass the sentence of ostracism on Lady Oriel; and could you, believing her guiltless, be the means of injuring her?"

"I shall certainly call on her to-morrow," said the Duchess; "for you will do me the justice of admitting, that I never oppose myself to your judgment."

"But to return," said the Duke, "to

the subject of the systematic selfishness that prevades society at present—I assure you, Jane, that it is distressing to witness it. In the senate, men are ashamed to give an *élan* to the noble and generous sentiments that animate them: at the bar, legal technicalities and satirical pleasantries supersede the bursts of eloquence and feeling that formerly resounded from the barristers, in defending virtue or exposing vice; and in society, men encounter each other armed against any display of high feeling, lest they be laughed at as enthusiastic or romantic, two terms now received as the acmé of reproach and ridicule. I wish a few of us plain honest men would take courage, stand by each other, dare to avow our pretensions to generosity and manliness, and show that there is a still greater ridicule than that of being considered unselfish and unknowing—the ridicule of being ashamed of being neither. Madame de Staël profoundly observed, 'that there are many men received in the best society, who, if accused of a dishonorable action, would reply, *It is possible that the action was wrong, but, at least, no one dare tell me so to my face.*' She adds, 'Nothing can convey a stronger idea of the utmost depravation; for where or how could society exist, if people were to kill each other; to have the right to do all the evil possible; to break one's word, and to lie, as long as it is not permitted to tell the person he has lied—in fact, to separate honor from bravery, and to transform courage into a means of committing or defending bad actions?' It is thus, my dear Jane, that we lose the substance of all that is good and noble, and adhere only to the shadow; and this is the most hopeless of all states. Few pause to ask, is Lady C——or Lady D——really culpable? the only question is, are they received? and if they are, they may continue to enjoy all the advantages of a good reputation, while they are universally known to have a bad one. Can any state of society be worse than that of receiving women, of whom nearly the whole of that society have the very worst opinion, and for receiving whom they can give no better excuse than that they are received elsewhere? The same facility exists with our sex. I meet men continually in the best society, whose reputations have long ceased to be doubtful, and have heard jokes passed on their alleged want of principle in the houses, and by the persons who invited them. One of the many bad effects of scandal is that its general extension accustoms people to hear the most dishonorable reports, without being either much shocked or surprised. They think on these subjects as the French wtiter did on another, when he said, '*Ce n'est rien s'il ne le sait pas, et peu de chose s'il le sait.*' The scandal, if true, is now of slight importance, and if untrue, of less, provided the person incurring it is supported by her clique; and this, Jane, I call demoralisation."

## CHAPTER XLII.

"Society itself, which should create
Kindness, destroys what little we have got:
To feel for none is the true social art
Of the world's stoics—men without a heart."

"But this is worshipful society,
And fits the mounting spirits like myself."

The Duke of Lismore, long the patron of arts and fashion, himself the nucleus of a circle round which were continually revolving all that was bright, fair, or gifted now opened Lismore House; and Lady Oriel, the Desmonds, and Forresters, were amongst the first invited to the concert and ball, with which his Grace commenced the festivities of the season. Mrs. Forrester had been requested to chaperon Lady Lucy Forbes, a young female friend, just making her *début* in the fashionable world and as she joined Lady Oriel with her protegee, who was new to life, that is to say, "Life in London," the two ladies undertook to initiate her into a knowledge of the most distinguished members of fashionable society.

"Who," exclaimed Lady Lucy Forbes, "is that beautiful woman with the oriental face? How lovely she is, and what an intellectual countenance!"

"That," replied Mrs. Forrester, "is the celebrated Mrs. Grantly, no less remarkable for her beauty, than for her genius and talents. Does she not look the very personification of a muse? What a classical style of beauty, and how much expression is joined to that oval face, and those exquisitely chiselled features! how delightful to witness such a rare union of beauty and genius! Look at her deep lustrous eyes, bent in languor, as if she thought not how many were seeking to catch their recognition; and now look, she speaks, and raises those brilliant orbs as if to make us doubt which is most beautiful, their animation or their repose. Every

line of her poetry is to me fraught with a recollection of her lovely face; it haunts me, and is my very *beau idéal* of what a *Corinne* should be. For a long time, I was afraid to read the productions of Mrs. Grantly, lest they should disappoint me. I thought it impossible that great talent could be joined to so much beauty; but I have learned to estimate them for their intrinsic merit, without any reference to their beautiful author; and it is no faint praise to say, 'the mind keeps the promise we had from the face.' That dark-haired lady with the fine expressive face, is the Countess of Guernsey: is she not brilliant and sparkling? What eyes and teeth, and what a cream coloured skin and richly animated tint on her cheek! It was to her, or her portrait, that Byron wrote those exquisite verses lately published; and it was of her that the Emperor Alexander of Russia observed, that she had too much beauty for a woman who wished to derive no advantage from it. Her reputation has, however, derived an advantage from it; for she has proved the possibility of great personal charms and high spirits being accompanied by a *retenue* of conduct that has defied even the suspicions of slander. Though an indefatigable leader of fashion, nay, by some considered an agitator, or dictator, she has escaped unharmed from the dangerous ordeal of female prudence, and ranks high in the list of unexceptionable wives and mothers."

"Who is that tall, noble-looking man, with a forehead resembling the busts of Demosthenes, who is now talking to Lady Guernsey?"

"That," said Lady Oriel, "is Lord Rey, the premier; does he not look formed to fill a high and important post? What a dignified air and distinguished bearing he has! He seems the very personification of aristocracy, from his intellectual looking head to his finely formed legs and feet. He is accused by many of being *fier*, but the charge only arises in the accuser's ignorance of his character. If he has *fierté*, it is only that of a proud consciousness of his own high reputation; and who would not be proud of it? See him with his family and friends, and it is impossible to meet a person more natural, kind, and unpretending.

"That fair, languid, handsome lady covered with the jewels, is the Marchioness of Stuartville. She was an heiress, which, in general, might serve for a synonyme for 'spoiled child;' but of how few spoilt children could it be *only* said, that her sole besetting sin is a passion for diamonds, if it be a sin? and she excuses this by saying, that they are the only bright things that do not fade."

"Oh! pray tell me who that dull-looking man is, that has fixed himself on Mr. Luttrell, who appears to wince under the infliction?"

"That," said Mrs. Forrester, "is a man, who, without any one qualification for shining in society, believes himself to have as many as Athenæus thought necessary for the formation of a cook, when he states that a *chef de cuisine* ought to be a mathematician, a theoretical musician, a natural philosopher, and a natural historian. Mr. —— is only a natural fool; but, unfortunately, he is filled with pretensions, and consequently is a most tiresome personage. You observe that short gentleman near the Duke of Lenox? He is the person of whom George the Fourth observed, on seeing him in uniform, that he must be a megalosaure, an antediluvian reptile, with paddles instead of legs, and clothed in mail."

"Our host does the honors extremely well," observed Mrs. Forrester; "how general his civilities are! After all, politeness ought to be added to the list of the cardinal virtues, for how many of them depend on it! At all events, politeness makes us forget the absence of virtue, and the want of politeness its presence."

"What!" interrupted Lord Albany, who overheard the last sentence, "moralising in a ball-room? and eulogising virtue and politeness in a scene where only the semblance of both are tolerated? Virtue, like a portionless beauty, has more admirers than followers: and politeness, like love, is only approved when oneself is the object. I dare not remain to hear my aphorism refuted," continued Lord Albany, gliding away.

"No, stay until I have replied to your aphorism by another," said Lord Montagu, who joined them in time to hear the retreating peer's observation; "and do not fly like a Parthian, throwing a dart as you retire."

"I fled, not from a dread of being refuted by you, Montagu, said Lord Albany returning; "it was the ladies," (bowing,) "that I feared; so now for your aphorism."

"Remember," said Lord Montagu, "you depreciated politeness and virtue, and I say, '*Les esprits légers font beaucoup de mal, quand ils se melent de juger les sentimens, qu'ils ne saurient comprendre.*'"

"And I must reply," said Lord Albany, laughing "that I am willing to be ranked in the list *des esprits légers*, if you are in that *des esprits forts;*" and the laughing Albany retired, leaving Lord Montagu to continue his *persiflage*.

"I have been pointing out the various persons who have passed before us to Lady Lucy," said Lady Oriel, "and fear I have but ill-performed my task. I should have had your lordship, or Lord Albany, to act as showman, and then I am sure Lady Lucy would have had a piquant epitome of the character of each person."

"That depends," replied Montagu, "on how the persons to be described stand with the world, for I confess that, from a natural indolence of disposition, I am rather disposed to think well of those who are well with the world, and *vice versa*, which verifies the proverb that '*Le monde est un joueur, qu'on a toujours de son parti quand on gagne.*"

"And I," said Mrs. Forrester, "am always disposed to doubt the justice of the sentences that the world passes on hearsay evidence, as I think the world a good witness on a trial, but a bad judge."

"One thing you must admit," said Lord Montagu, "which is, '*Si méchant que soit le monde, il ne nous ferait pas grand mal si nous n'étions pas si souvent son complice.*'" And so saying, the peer passed on, leaving Lady Oriel to reflect on the truth of the axiom, and to apply it to her own peculiar case.

"*On ne connait bien tout l'étendue d'un malheur que lorsqu'on s'en accuse,*" thought Lady Oriel to herself, as she recurred to the past; "I cannot blame the world for wounding me with the arms which I presented to it. The fault was all my own."

## CHAPTER XLIII.

Les gens vertueux sont rares, mais ceux qui estiment la vertu ne le sont pas; d'autant moins qu'il y a mille occasions dans la vie, où l'on a absolument besoin des personnes qui en ont.

MARIVAUX.

LADY ORIEL observed, and the reflection sank deep in her mind, that all the charity shown in drawing favorable conclusions on her recent *esclandre*, emanated from those who were pure and unsuspected themselves, and who judged her by the criterion of their own hearts. In no instance had she met with slights from a woman of undoubted virtue; while, on the contrary, she had experienced various indications of rudeness from ladies who had been compelled to profit largely by the charitable interpretations put on their conduct, and who, feeling how little they merited the forbearance shown them, were disposed to believe that she too stood in a similar position.

It is fortunate for the sinning, that there are many good and virtuous people in the world, otherwise how could one half of society meet the other? The vulgar phrase of set a thief to catch a thief, would be more than verified by the instinctive tact with which certain errors would be detected and exposed by those who had known them by personal experience; confidence would be destroyed, because one of its best guards, a belief in virtue, would no longer exist; and *médisance*, which always prevails in proportion to the degree of corruption in society, would become general.

The trial Lady Oriel had passed through, determined her on never again living in habits of intimacy with ladies whose reputations were too apocryphal to admit of their judging with charity, or supporting a tottering friend.

Among the acquaintances she now sought to cultivate, the wife of the Premier, and the Marchioness of Bowood, were distinguished. The first lady, from the high official station of her husband, was called to take a lead in society which her domestic habits had hitherto led her to decline, though her various accomplishments and dignified manners peculiarly fitted her for the post of honor. Lady Rey was always cited as an example for mothers and wives; and her daughters emulated her virtues. Married in early youth to a nobleman no less distinguished for his high character than for his brilliant and solid talents as a statesman, and who sought for happiness and repose from his political duties, where only it can be truly found, in the bosom of his family—the domestic circle of Lord Rey had become proverbial for the exhilarating example it furnished of harmony and rational enjoyment. Even he, the supposed misanthropic poet, whose sarcasms have touched all circles, and spared none, never recurred to the family of the Premier without commendations whose warmth proved their sincerity; and he has been often heard to say that one such family might reconcile even a sceptic to the belief in virtue and goodness.

No wonder, then, that Lady Oriel was anxious to become something more than a guest at the grand receptions of Lady Rey, and that she desired to be admitted to the more select reunions—a distinction that was soon accorded her.

The Marchioness of Bowood had long been on visiting terms with Lady Oriel, who rarely missed any of the *soirées* at Bowood House; and the amiability and kindness of its owners, so generally felt and acknowledged, had given a peculiar charm to its society. In the splendid gallery at Bowood House, filled with the finest productions of art, might, during the season, be seen all that London could boast of rank, genius, and talent. Statesmen, poets, wits, authors, and artists, were here to be met, enlivened by a galaxy of female beauty, furnishing subjects of inspiration for the chisel or the pencil, or realising the dreams of the poet. Nothing could be more judicious than this blending of society: and the *soirées* at the Marchioness of Bowood's were considered to offer more various attractions than those of any other house in London; the very locale of the splendid suite of rooms assisting to give a charm to them.

"Pray look, Lady Lucy," said Lady Oriel, "and tell me if England has not reason to be proud when she can show such specimens of beauty as those in that circle; no other capital in Europe could, I am sure, produce them."

"Who is that handsome woman," asked Lady Lucy, "whose eyes outshine the diamonds on her brow? How very lovely she is! and how completely aristocratic is the character of her beauty—delicacy supported by conscious dignity, and *fierté* softened by feminine mildness!"

"That," replied Lady Oriel, "is the young Duchess of Lenox; and that distinguished-looking woman on whom she leans, and who displays pearls, when she smiles, that rival the oriental ones on her neck, is her sister, the Marchioness of Burton. What a fine animated expression of countenance, fierce, and almost stern in its expression when grave, but beautiful when she smiles. They are the daughters of the Marquess of Mona, and are justly considered one of the handsomest families in England. Of them indeed it may be said, 'all the daughters are virtuous, and the sons brave.' That lovely blonde, who is speaking to the Marchioness of Burton, is the Lady Augusta Garing. Is she not the personification of a poet's bright imagining, blooming as Hebe, and almost as celestial? Purity and innocence are enshrined on that fair brow, and the fairy foot that peeps forth from her robe, might serve as a model to the sculptor."

"She is indeed most lovely," replied Lady Lucy; "and so is that lady now entering."

"That is the Marchioness of Glansicarde," said Lady Oriel. "Is not talent marked in every lineament of her beautiful face? But how could it be otherwise with the daughter of such a father? at least, according to my belief, that talent is hereditary. The two ladies at the door are Lady Yesterfield, and her sister, Mrs. Branson. They might serve to personify the morning and evening stars; both charming, and yet unlike each other. Their family are remarkable for beauty, and I understand equally so for goodness. That handsome woman is Lady Emeline Hart Burtley, a young poetess of much brilliancy and imagination. Her poetry resembles the exotic production of warmer climes; bright, luxuriant, and fanciful. The lady next her is a *bas-bleu*, in the best acceptation of the phrase, being not only highly learned, but full of talent. Matthias, than whom no better judge can be found, pronounces her the best Italian scholar of our day, and her translations of Petrarca are the best I know. Lady Norely, who is now speaking to Lady Lacre, is another of our literary ladies, and is remarkable for the sprightliness of her wit and the soundness of her understanding."

"You are very kind, dear Lady Oriel," said Lady Lucy, "to have told me the names of all these beauties and *bas-bleus*, therefore I won't be so *exigeant* as to ask you to name the other lovely faces I see around. They look like a *parterre* of the richest and rarest flowers, each rendering the other more beautiful by its vicinity."

"How pleasant it is," said Mrs. Forrester, "to rest the eyes on such an assemblage of beauty! and yet there is something melancholy too in the pleasure; and I could almost weep, as did Xerxes when he contemplated his soldiers, as I reflect how fleeting are the charms which now dazzle our eyes, and that a few years will have faded their lustre. There is something very touching in the wreck of beauty; it is difficult to believe that the silken tresses, starry eyes, cheeks of rose, lips of coral, and teeth of pearl, now before us, may be sought for in vain, some years hence."

"We must only console ourselves," replied Lady Oriel, "with hoping to find a successional crop of beauties, the daughters of those now before us, springing up to take their places. Are not the roses of this summer as fresh and blooming as those of the last? and do we not look forward to seeing the next vernal season bring forth as bright ones? So it is with beauty—as fast as one race fades, another succeeds; and it is only eyes dimmed by age, which discover that the last are inferior to the first, for contemporaries deny this decline."

"There are many specimens of the florid gothic here," said Lord Dorville, joining in the conversation, "that would confirm your last remark, Lady Oriel, which I inadvertently overheard, and which proves the truth of the old proverb, 'that listeners never heard good of themselves,' for I am old enough to have lost every trace of humanity, as far as externals go, and yet I passed in my day for what the ladies call a very pretty fellow. You look very incredulous, fair ladies," said the fine old peer; "but I refer you to your grandmothers, and to a certain portrait, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. I come to assemblies like this once or twice a-year, and go home comparing notes between the beauties of the night and the beauties of forty years ago. *On dit que les absents ont toujours tort*, and I believe it is so, for I find myself quite as well satisfied with the faces before me," (bowing to them,) "as I ever was with the beauties that charmed me in my youth, though the turbaned dames newly restored and varnished, whom I meet in the salons, observe to me how the present race have degenerated, and call on me to furnish evidence of the superiority of the first, to the present, every look of theirs rendering the comparison almost ludicrous."

## CHAPTER XLIV.

"Would you fashion's temple see?
Lovely ladies, come with me.
There you'll find what's rich and rare,
All that can adorn the fair;
Di'monds from Golconda's mine,
Em'ralds, rubies, sapphires shine,
Sending forth a thousand rays,
Or concentered in a blaze;
Laces, satins, velvets sheen,
That might deck the proudest queen;
All for lovely woman sought,
From remotest regions brought."

Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester having promised to take Lady Lucy Forbes shopping, conducted her to Howell and James's, in Regent-street, an establishment that astonishes a novice in London more than any other, and which quite bewildered the youthful Lady Lucy.

"What a delightful place!" said she; "what exquisite things! Do you not come here very often, dear Lady Oriel? Oh! I must buy that wreath; it looks as if the morning dew still trembled on its leaves, it is so fresh and blooming."

Lady Oriel, amused with the unsophisticated raptures of Lady Lucy, told her that she dared not come *very* often to Howell's, for fear of making her too proud of belonging to a sex, in whose honor was raised such a temple. Behold," added Lady Oriel, "the zephyry laces, more delicate than the finest web that the hapless Arachne ever spun, and diaphané gauzes from France, ethereal as the drapery of the cloud that deceived Ixion. See the rainbow-tinted chintzes and muslins, with the soft-textured silks and satins of England. The velvets of 'Genoa the superb,' the delicate poplins of Ireland, the cambrics of Scotland, the treasures of the Indian loom; the brilliant gems of Orient dazzling the sight, and the perfumes that 'breathe of Araby the blest' stealing on the senses from their crystal prisons; the most remote regions ransacked to bedeck us, and the productions of all climes brought to adorn us. All this," continued Lady Oriel, laughing at her own description, and the gravity with which Lady Lucy listened to it, "is calculated to impress a woman with too great an idea of the importance of her sex, for whom alone this splendid pile is reared, and therefore I do not indulge myself often by coming here."

"And I," said the artless Lady Lucy, "should like to come every day, even if I had not the power of buying, merely to look at such beautiful things as I see around me."

"You remind me," replied Lady Oriel, "of the *naive* question of a clever English child to her mother in Venice, on seeing the Place St. Mark for the first time. 'Pray, mamma, are people allowed to see this every day, or only on holidays?'"

The rooms at Howell's were filled with handsome and well-dressed women, all admiring and admired; and the suite where the jewellery is displayed, exhibited a "chosen race of fashion's favorite sons," examining the *bijouterie*, and deciding on the relative merit of turquoises or sapphires for buttons; or whether a Trichinopoly or Maltese rose-chain was the most *distingué*

for the evening. At one counter was a young lady with her mamma, choosing her first ball-dress, and in deep consultation whether it should be virgin white or *couleur de rose;* and at the next were two pale and melancholy-looking women, selecting gray and black for their second mourning for a mother.

Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester both mused on the reflections the scene around them gave birth to, but Lady Lucy could do nothing but wonder and admire; and when music stole on her ear, and advancing to the place whence it proceeded she saw an exquisite clockwork group of Chinese musicians, and a rope-dancer performing evolutions, and pointing the light fantastic toe with a precision worthy of Monsieur Paul himself, there were no bounds to her childish delight, and she stood quite as amused as the beautiful children who were near her, applauding the graceful dancing and perfect time of the Chinese. "Happy age, when every thing can please!" thought Lady Oriel. "How long will it be ere this fair creature has learned to look on all that now enchants her as coolly as I do? May she at least be spared the lesson that has for ever removed the veil of enchantment from my eyes, and never have to accuse herself of the folly which has purchased my worldly wisdom!"

"I thought," said Mrs. Forrester, "that this establishment had been peculiarly dedicated to ladies; but I see here all the young men of fashion about town! Do they come to admire the ladies, or the scarcely less beautiful objects of taste around?"

"Both, I would charitably suppose," replied Lady Oriel. "How busy they all seem! That group of young men are selecting waistcoats of tints as various as the minds of the buyers, and which, ere a week has passed, will be adopted by all their set. Another are choosing brocaded satins for their *robes de chambre;* and the sentimental are debating whether a bracelet or a ring would be the most appropriate *cadeau* to the 'Cynthia of the minute' of their fancy. Husbands come here to select peace-offerings for petulant wives, or *souvenirs* for tender ones; lovers to bear away some *gage d'amour* to *les dames de leurs pensées;* brothers to buy gifts for sisters, and sons for fond mothers; and many a young man to purchase *milles jolies choses* for the person dearest to him on earth, whose image, reflected in the glasses around, shares his admiration with the pretty things he is selecting; need I add, that person is—himself? Foreigners are more surprised at the magnificence of this establishment than at any other in London," continued Lady Oriel. "I once accompanied some French ladies here; and they were so astonished at the display of riches at every side, that they could not for an hour pause to select the articles they came in search of. I remember one of them observed to me, that if Paris had such a house, half the husbands would be ruined, as French ladies cannot resist temptation as the prudent English do."

It was not without repeated hints that Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester could get Lady Lucy away; and she left Howell's declaring that, now she found it was not dearer than other houses, and had so much more beautiful things, she never would go into another; holding up her empty purse in triumph, the contents of which had furnished her with, as she said, fifty of the loveliest, most useful, and tempting things, when she thought that twice the sum could not have purchased half of them!

## CHAPTER XLV.

"Ye gods! ye gods! and must I hear all this—
And not e'en Joseph's arithmetic miss,
Nor Cobbet's speech, to prove the rich and great
The working-classes wrong, defame and hate—
And, for a few good speakers, that are seen,
'Like angel visits, few and far between,'
To break the dull monotony around,
And give us sounding sense, not senseless sound—
To hear, night after night, and curse my fate,
The same weak arguments and long debate?"
*St. Stephen's.*

Lord Oriel, Mr. Desmond, and Colonel Forrester, agreed to go to the House of Commons, to hear the debate on the Irish Bill. On their way, Colonel Forrester proposed a wager to Lord Oriel, as to how many times within half an hour the two words "*the people*" would be used in the first speech of a repealing member.

This led to Mr. Desmond's observing, that these two words, though so continually used, never failed to produce a certain effect. "Joined together," said he, "they have a magical influence that rarely fails to draw attention, and acts as a claptrap to the lower classes of the community, as does some liberal sentiment introduced into a dramatic performance and addressed to the gallery; both are in general used for the worst purposes, and how seldom for any good! Does a democrat wish to excite a tumult and draw attention, as a means of attaining some object of egotisti-

cal ambition, to gratify which the peace of his country would be readily sacrificed by him? 'the people' is the watch-word for revolt; and repeated with due emphasis, gains him a crowd of idle followers, too lazy to work, but not ashamed to steal; who throw up their hats, and give him their 'sweet voices!'—the why or wherefore, they can hardly tell. Does a dramatic writer bestow his tediousness on a suffering audience, anticipating the fate of his maudlin production? he sprinkles it over with a few liberal sentiments, addressed to popular feeling, in order that the applause of the gallery may drown the disapprobation of the boxes and pit. Thus are the people and liberal sentiments made the tools of those who never use them except for their own private ends, and who deride the folly by which they profit. It was truly observed by a French writer, that the people are always the instruments, and always the pretext, but *never* the object in a revolution; and the termination of every revolution has proved the truth of this observation—the people, who are the many, being sacrificed for the benefit of their democratical leaders, who are the few."

They arrived in time to hear Mr. Manly make his admirable speech—a speech that positively electrified the house; and to witness the discomfiture of him, whose equivocating defence filled with disgust a nation accustomed to reverence veracity too deeply ever to shrink from its laws, whatever may be the consequences. Mr. Desmond had not been at the House of Commons for many years, consequently many of the faces of the members were unknown to him, but Lord Oriel undertook to point out the most remarkable of them.

"That tall, thin, distinguished man, with a forehead that would have enchanted Gall or Spurzheim, I need not name to you, as every one knows Sir Francis Ramsbury, and I may add, every one esteems and respects him; he is an admirable speaker, and, what is better, an admirable man. The person next him, you of course know; he is your Secretary, Mr. Manly, a man of great talent and power, and formed to take a leading part in political life. He has all the requisites for a public man: high personal and mental courage, strict principles, and eloquence that never degenerates into bombast or hyperbole; he is always listened to with attention in the House; and the man whom one of the Irish members denounced as the most unpopular man in Ireland, has the consolation of being one of the most respected in England. It appears that the office of Irish Secretary, which certainly, however it may be a post of honor, is decidedly a post of danger, may now be considered as the trial for young men of high talent. We have had three examples of remarkable men who have filled it; the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Neil, and the present occupant; and three such predecessors must always incite a successor to distinguish himself. By the by, there is Sir Robert Neil; I hope he may speak, as few know Ireland so well as he, and none can describe what has once come under his observation more forcibly, eloquently, or truly. He is an able man, and a perfect master of business; much too clever and useful, not to make me wish he was employed. Such men as Sir Robert Neil, who have great stakes in the country, are the safest to be employed in steering the bark of the state; and we have too few, who to grant talents unite a large fortune, to spare the services of such a one, whose opinions carry so powerful an influence with the sensible part of the community, and who, having much to lose, cannot be suspected of being disposed to risk it by hazardous measures. That tall, gentlemanly-looking person, who has just entered, is Mr. Hutler Lerguson, the warm and eloquent defender of the Poles. And there at his left you see the gifted author of a series of novels, any one of which must obtain for their author a literary fame, rarely accorded to any author, but more particularly to one of his years, and still more rarely merited. That gentleman he is talking to, is his brother, a high-gifted young man. The two gentlemen to the right are Mr. Errice, the brother-in-law of Lord Rey, and Mr. Makaully. The first is a most clever, sensible man of business, and the speeches of the other tell you better than I can, what his powers are. The Agitator, of course, you know by sight—there he is; his countenance is good, and peculiarly Irish; his voice well suited to the powerful bursts of eloquence with which he inundates his auditors; and it must be admitted, he is one of the most effective speakers in the world, as he dazzles where he cannot convince; and though he often leaves Reason free, he makes captive the Passions, which but too generally prevent her using her freedom."

"You should see the effect of his eloquence on the Irish," said Mr. Desmond;

"it is magical. When he said a day or two ago that *he* represented Ireland, it was not so hyperbolical, as the expression borrowed from Louis XIV. by Napoleon, when he said, "*Je suis la France!*" He represents the whole Roman Catholic population of the lower class, for they only see, hear, believe, act, or think, as the Agitator tells them; or rather should it be said, *they* represent *him*, being but the instrument of his will, wielded as he thinks fit. I wish Mr. Thiel would speak, though, perhaps, it may be as agreeable to read his speech, as to hear him deliver it. His mind is so embued with poetry, that it comes forth without effort, nay, as it were, *malgré lui*, and his images are so poetical and forcible that one cannot help wishing they were embodied in a poem or tragedy, instead of in a speech. Thiel is a man of genius, and I am one of the many who wish that all such were addressing posterity by the midnight lamp at home, instead of addressing St. Stephen's, as it is easier to find good speakers than good writers; and of the best speeches that have been made on popular topics, how few will be read ten years hence! I never come here," continued Mr. Desmond, "and hear the plaudits bestowed on any of the popular speakers, without reverting to other days, when Pitt, Fox, Grattan, Sheridan, and Canning, were wont to electrify the House. How often have I heard them, and owned the magical influence of eloquence kindled by genius. It seems to me as if the plaudits given to their successors awaken the echoes in the house of death so near us; and that from their very tombs is sent forth a reverberation, to cheer others in the path in which they strove. From St. Stephen's to Westminster Abbey the distance is short, but the road is difficult: and those who have traced it so gloriously, led on by genius, and supported by principle, sleep calmly the sleep of death, unmoved by all that could once animate their glowing souls, within a few paces of the scene of their past triumphs. What a contrast between the scene of turmoil and worldly cares before us—the passion-stirring harangues, and the angry rejoinders—and the awful silence of the house of God, where reposes all that was earthly of those deathless souls!"

Lord Oriel, seeing that the old man was moved with the reminiscences he had called up, and fearing the excitement might be too strong, proposed to leave the house, and they returned home.

Colonel Forrester escorted Lady Oriel and his wife to Vauxhall, thinking that the more his sister was seen in public at the present crisis, the more advantageous it would be in checking the injurious reports circulated about her. Lords Montagu and Albany joined them; the latter declaring that he had come to walk off the possible effects of a most inimitable dinner at the modern Lucullus's, Lord Refton, where one was sure to dine in the saloon of Apollo.

"You, Forrester, understand a dinner," said Lord Albany, "and therefore I wish you had partaken of that which we enjoyed to-day."

"Do pray, Lord Albany, instruct us novices in the mystery of *la cuisine*," said Lady Oriel, "and tell us what you consider a good dinner; and, if not impertinent, may I ask you to give us the *menu* of that which has elicited your commendation?"

"I am proud and flattered by the request," said the peer. "Indeed I take a pleasure in seeing a taste for the table extending, and in forwarding this rational taste as much as I can, by judicious praise when merited, and disapprobation when otherwise. Hitherto it has been a general observation, that the English know how to *eat*, but not how to *taste*—a reproach that almost stamps us as barbarians. A faultless cook was not only meant to satisfy the appetite, but to excite it; whereas our barbarous Anglais look more to quantity than quality, and are satisfied with thinking they are eating French dishes, when they are devouring some *entrées* that no *gargotier* on the Boulevards at Paris would acknowledge. But to return to Refton's dinner—he had *la bisque d'écrevisse bien liée sans etre tournée*, rivalling that of the Rocher de Cancale; *le potage printanier, tout verdoyant de fraicheur, l'éternel turbot et la sauce d'homard qui faisait ressortir sa blancheur, et qui devoit lui rappeler le corail qu'il avoit quittée nouvellement, tel que sa fraicheur l'attestoit.*"

"You really get poetical in your description," said Colonel Forrester; "hitherto I have been of opinion that poetry proceeded from the heart, but I now begin to think it may originate in a neighboring region."

"My dear Forrester, if you interrupt me, I shall never get to the end of my *menu*," said Lord Albany. "*Le filet de bœuf étonné de son déguisement a la Napolitaine. Le quartier de chevreuil, faché d' etre mariné,*

*pour etre présentable, et vexé de s' etre nourri d' herbes aromatiques en pure pert. Les filets de volaille a la Royale. Les boudins a la Richelieu: les cotelettes de pigeon a la Dusselle, la timbale a la financiere. Entrées parfaites qui attestoient et le gout exquis de l' artiste, et les finances de l' hote.* I have obeyed you, Lady Oriel, and almost fear that I have bored you too, as I have observed that in eating, as in all other sciences, it is necessary to discuss it *con amore*. But *en verité*, when I think of the vast obligation that this most admirable and useful of all the sciences owes to Refton, under whose fostering care it is daily extending, I am apt to grow enthusiastic."

The party were amused with the affected gravity with which Lord Albany dwelt on the subject, and Lady Oriel promised that next season she would consult him in the choice of an *artiste de cuisine*, as otherwise she should be afraid of inviting him to dinner.

"*Apropos* to dinner," said Lord Albany. "A man is now passing, whom I cut last year for two reasons—first, that I found it easier to cut him than his *fricandeau*, which was impenetrable to the *spoon*, and the barbarian advised me to try a knife; the second, that the Goth had a *purée de truffes! Imaginez vous*, a substance that should be *croquante*, served as *pureé!* There was no speaking to him after such a solecism in civilisation. I shall never forget the dinner he gave us that day. *Soupe a la reine, tournée;* fish, guiltless of having seen its native element for weeks; *vol au vent, qui auroit impunément affronté le vent d' est, les escalloppes de la pereau qui, comme dit Boileau sentoient encore les choix dont ils furent nourris*, and the impenetrable *fricandeau*, before named. I always judge of a man by his dinners; and as they are the only things emanating from him that I can profit by, if they are good, I cultivate his friendship: if bad, I bow out of it, as no man ought to demand the sacrifice of his friend submitting to starvation or indigestion because *he* chooses to keep a bad cook. All men past twenty-five, and most men under it, seem to think—

'Their various cares in one great point combine,
The business of their lives, that is—to dine.'

'So much superior is the stomach's smart,
To all the vaunted horrors of the heart.'"

"What a strange creature is Albany!" said Colonel Forrester, as they drove off from Vauxhall. "To hear him descant on the mysteries of the *cuisine*, one would suppose that he thought of nothing else, and yet he is, perhaps, one of the best informed men in England, full of talent, and with powers of being satirical, from the lightness and plaisanterie of his *coup de pattes*, that few ever possessed without abusing; but he is so thoroughly good-natured, that, unlike the generality of wits, he prefers his friends to his jokes, and suppresses many a one calculated to set the table in a roar."

"This is a great merit," said Lady Oriel, "in an age when people attend so little to the feelings of others, and think more of making a reputation for wit than they regret unmaking the reputations of half their acquaintance, for one is very often the consequence of the other. Half the *plaisanteries* that do so much mischief, and give so much pain, proceed less from malice than from the desire to shine; and this desire is so general, that people attempt to say sharp things, who can only say coarse ones. It is like endeavoring to cut a hard substance with a paper-knife; the intention obvious, but the effort is unsuccessful. If, therefore, those who have really power to shine at the expense of their friends and acquaintance, use it not, they have double merit, and the more so, because the world seldom gives them credit for their forbearance."

"It is strange," said Mrs. Forrester, "to see satirical people so well received in society, even by those who suffer the most from them."

"It is precisely because they fear to suffer still more, that they act the *amiable*," said her husband; "but of this be assured, that if satire was not universally acceptable, we should have fewer satirists. The very persons who affect to be shocked at some cutting epigram, pointed lampoon, or piquant anecdote, are the first to engage the author, or to repeat the effusion with a moral disclaimer, of 'How very shocking it is!' 'How ill-natured!' and a hope that 'there was no foundation of truth in it.'"

"Why, my dear brother," said Lady Oriel, "where can you have formed such opinions of the world?"

"In the world, my dear sister," replied Colonel Forrester; "and be assured, there is wisdom in the proverb,

'Chi pensa male spesso l'indovina.'"

"I shall grow afraid of you," said Mrs. Forrester, with a glance, in which less of fear than love was visible," as I shall begin to think you judge from self, and if

you judge so harshly of the world, with such opinions, you cannot love."

"Ungrateful that you are," said the adoring husband,

> "Cara al mio cuor tu sei,
> Ciò ch'è il sole agli occhi miei."

She placed her white and dimpled hand on his mouth, to stop the continuation of his address, and he kissed it fondly though she affected to chide him.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

> "Think on mercy!
> Mercy! the brightest diadem of empires!
> Mercy! that does distinguish men from brutes,
> And kings, that use it right, from common men."

> "The good are better made by ill—
> As odors crush'd are sweeter still!"

When we read the fearful catalogue of crimes that the Irish newspapers are filled with, it is difficult to believe that the people committing them can have any of the good qualities with which we love to invest the Irish. Bravery, for which they are proverbial, is ill shown by the most barbarous murders; and generosity, to which they are certainly not without claims, is not visible in the revengeful spirit that is but too often displayed in the vengeance with which they visit real or supposed offences. And yet they are brave, and generous, notwithstanding the enormities into which they are hurried for their crimes, paradoxical as the opinion may appear, are but the excesses of the qualities we have named, and which, if cultivated, would produce flowers and fruit instead of poisonous weeds.

Ignorance is the bane of the Irish peasant; it leaves him open to the tyrannical mental empire of those whom interested motives may lead to usurp it; and, unguarded by principles, the only true barriers for resisting evil counsel or example, with excitable feelings, warm imaginations, and no judgment, he falls a ready victim to their designing arts.

"Don't you think, Jim dear," said Grace, "that it would be a good thing to write a line" (as a letter is always called in Ireland) "to Miss Desmond that was, to ask her to spake a word to the dear ould masther, in favor of poor Patrick. Sure, if they were to transport him, 'twould be a terrible thing; I won't let myself think that they would do worse than that to him: but the notion of his being taken away from Mary, now that his eyes are open to his own folly, makes me very unaisy. Miss Desmond, that is Mistress Forrester, would put in a good word to the ould masther, and the masther would spake to the king, and ask him to write to the Lord Liftenant to let poor Patrick out of jail. Oh! this is a good thought and a lucky one, and I'll write the letter before I sleep. Mistress Forrester is too good to refuse spaking to the masther. She was always kind: and now that she has a loving husband of her own, she'll feel more than ever for a poor creathur of a woman that's in danger of losing hers. The ould masther will never refuse her, for he is always glad to do a kind action; and as for the king, I'm not a bit afraid of his refusing the masther, for every one says he has the best heart in the world. The only one I'm afraid of is the Lord Liftenant, for he being on the spot in Ireland, and seeing with his own eyes all the wickedness and mischief the foolish misguided people commit, won't be so aisy on the prisoners as the others; but I don't think he'll refuse the king, if he writes him a line—and then we'll have poor Patrick home again with Mary."

"Sure, Grace a-vourneen," said Jim, "the Lord Liftenant couldn't in dacency refuse the king, who's the head of all, like: and he himself, the Lord Liftenant I main, is one of the most forgiving, grand-hearted men in the world, so he'll be sure to send down a pardon if he's asked."

Grace and Jim made a *détour*, that they might visit poor Mary Mahoney, and found her better and her boy much less feverish. She was filled with thankfulness at the good accounts of her husband; but still the love of the woman triumphed over the prudence of the wife, as she expressed her hopes that poor dear Patrick wouldn't take it too deeply to heart, nor blame himself too much for their trouble. Grace assured her that Patrick now had a perfect sense, of his own imprudence, adding that they found him reading his Bible, the salutary effects of which study were already visible in his altered sentiments.

This last intelligence gratified Mary, beyond measure. "This is indeed," said the poor woman, "happy tidings for me, for I know by experience the comfort that blessed book will give him. Many and many's the weary and sorrowful hour that I have been relieved by reading it, when poor Patrick first took to following the Repalers, and that I fell into fretting. I never opened it but that the words fell on

my heart just like as they tell me, oil falls on the sea, making it quite calm. And sure, how can I be thankful enough for knowing how to read, which opened this blessing to me! How often have I lamented that poor Patrick was not reading it with me! But just see the goodness and mercy of Providence, that out of every trouble can make good: Patrick is taken up for a crime, of which, God be thanked he is innocent; and the separation from me, and the death of our poor infant, has turned his mind to the only true comfort that can be found. There he is, in that solitary cell, reading the word of God, and fixing his thoughts on Him in whom alone is safety; and I am thankful that his eyes are opened, though at the price of so much grief."

Grace Cassidy lost no time in addressing Mrs. Forrester, or Miss Desmond, as she still loved to call her, and the next day's post saw the following letter despatched.

"Most Honored Lady:

"In all my troubles, and I have lately had my share, you have always appeared to me as the guardian angel that was to save me. I do not now address you for myself, as, God be thanked, Jim has grown wiser, and I trust will never again give me cause for unhappiness. But Patrick Mahoney is pining in a prison, and his poor wife, Mary Mahoney, is lying on the bed of sickness and sorrow, having lost one child; and the rosy-cheeked curly-headed boy whom you and the dear mistress used to admire, is dangerously ill, while the loving husband and fond father is kept away from them.

"It is in your power, dear and honored lady, to extricate him from the doleful cell in which he is now shut up, with no other company but his own sad thoughts, and his angry conscience always reminding him that, had he followed good advice, he would now be at home with his wife and child. I pity Patrick even more than poor Mary; because her conscience has not fallen out with her, and must be saying comforting things in the midst of all her troubles; and sure, dear lady, it is a blessing to have a companion which we never can be rid of, like conscience—a friend, instead of a foe.

"I thought of all this when I saw how she bore her troubles, and laid her dead baby in the coffin, with a look which I never can forget; it seemed as if she had found courage and consolation from a voice within her own mind; and sure enough, that voice must come from conscience. But when I saw the care-worn face of poor Patrick, and the tears falling down his pale cheeks—and oh! for certain, 'tis a bitter sight to see a man weep—quite as different to the tears of a woman, as an April shower is to the pelting drops that are forced from some black cloud by the winter's storm—I thought to myself, dear and honored lady, that it was a blessing when we had only to weep for misfortunes; but that the scalding tears wrung from us by our faults, if they leave their marks on the cheek, leave more fearful marks on the heart from which they spring.

"Patrick is accused of being concerned in the murder of a policeman; he is entirely innocent, God be thanked! but he says, that if he had not been in the constant habit of leaving his poor woman, and being out at unseasonable hours in the night, he would not, he could not, have fallen under such a bad suspicion. What I beg of you to do, is to get the dear ould masther to spake to the king; every one says he is a good, humane, tender-hearted gentleman, and to ax him to write a bit of a line to the Lord Liftenant, to let Patrick home to his poor wife.

"What makes me so anxious at this present moment is, that the Irish Laider has been writing to tell us that the soldiers are going to be let loose on us, like bloodhounds, and that instead of being tried by judge and jury, prisoners are to be judged by young officers come from school, who would rather condemn 'em than not. I don't much believe all this, but still it frightens us; so, for God's sake, send the ould masther to the king at once. Or may-be 'twould be as well for yourself, dear lady, to spake to the queen, for women are always tender-hearted, and can pity each other, and she'd spake to the king, or may-be write to the Lady Liftenant to get poor Patrick off.

"Sure it would be a good thing, and a great sarvice to Ireland, if the ould masther would just tell the king, that the quiet and dacent people in Ireland—and there's many more of 'em than is supposed—are afraid of their lives of the wicked disturbers, that are bent on mischief, and are ready to kill, maim, or destroy all who won't join 'em. Many's the poor men that goes with 'em through fear of losing their lives, or having their houses burned over their heads; but if once they had sol-

diers and officers to take their parts, would give up all nightly meetings and disturbances, and sleep in peace.

"Another thing that frightens the poor people here out of their wits is, that they are tould that there's six hundred—I won't write the bad name—in the Parliament Commons, that's determined to do 'em mischief. Until now they thought the English was their friends, and they had confidence; but you know, dear lady, how aisy it is to make a poor Irishman believe any thing. My own poor honest husband was made to believe he was a slave and starving, when he was at liberty to attend all agitation meetings in the country, and had aten a hearty dinner off as elegant a piece of salt pork, as red as a rose, with cabbage like the green leaves of young trees, so fresh and bright, and potatoes laughing out of their skins with joy at being aten.

"How I wish you were all over here now! The place is so beautiful, the sky looks more blue than ever, and the river more clear; and as for the trees and flowers, sure they're as bright in their freshness, as if they came out spic and span new for the first time, though we've now been looking at 'em, and a pleasant sight it is, for the last six weeks. The birds are singing on every branch, and more blackbirds and thrushes than ever; and I'm sure the English birds can't sing more sweetly, nor the flowers smell more delightfully, than they do at Springmount; though all the world declares that everything in England is finer than here.

"And now it's time for me to finish this long letter. I know your goodness so well, that I'm sure you'll pardon my boldness in writing it; and yet when I think how many long miles 'twill have to go over, and the wide green sea to cross before your own pretty eyes will look at it, I don't feel half so courageous as when I used to be tould to walk up to Miss Desmond's room at Springmount, and that I used to tell you all that was passing in my poor ignorant mind. But here, you had woods, and mountains, and flowers, and green fields, about you, and seemed as fond of 'em as I am, which gave me courage to spake to you; for I used to say to myself, sure the young mistress, great a lady as she is, loves all that I love, and therefore I needn't be afraid to open my heart to her; but now you are in London, with only great large houses, and lords and ladies about you, I'm almost afraid you won't feel the same to your poor country-woman, who is ever your obedient humble servant,

"GRACE CASSIDY.

"If not too great a liberty, might I beg my humble duty to the dear masther and mistress?"

Poor Grace's letter was read aloud at the breakfast-table by Mrs. Forrester, and though many passages in it elicited a smile, the simplicity and single-heartedness of the good young woman, drew commendations from all.

Mr. Desmond observed to Colonel Forrester, that the *naiveté* of Grace, in requesting that the king might be entreated to write to his Majesty's representative in Ireland in favor of Patrick Mahoney, reminded him of the Roman Catholic custom in Italy of praying to God to influence their patron saint; and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to persuade Grace, that the Lord *Liftenant*, as she calls the Viceroy, is not in Ireland a more powerful person than the king himself.

Instead of obeying Grace's desire of addressing the king, Mr. Desmond wrote to the two most influential magistrates in his county to interest themselves for poor Patrick, and make his innocence manifest—a proceeding she would have thought much less advisable than that which she counselled; as Grace, in common with all the persons of her own class in Ireland, entertained an implicit belief that *interest*, and not *justice*, was the best thing to be sought; or rather, that the latter could only be obtained by the former.

A disrespect for the laws has long been prevalent in Ireland, and has led to the certain and injurious effects of a scepticism in justice. A criminal entertains a strong hope that the *interest* of his landlord, or some one else whose interest can be obtained, will save him from the merited punishment of his crimes; and the innocent, though conscious of his freedom from the guilt imputed to him, is "afraid he'll suffer, for sure he has no *interest* to get him out of his troubles." The demoralising effects of such a state of things is best proved by the actual condition of Ireland, where law and justice are supposed to depend on power and interest.

"Well, what if I did give Jack Brohy an unlucky blow, that knocked the breath out of his body, and sent him to sleep in the church-yard instead of his bed, sure the masther can get me off; he knows all them that will be on the jury, and they wouldn't like to affront him by finding me

guilty. And does not he know the judge himself? sure they all go to eat their grand dinner at the great house."

This is the way of reasoning and thinking of the lower classes in Ireland; and until they are taught to respect the laws, and look with confidence for justice, there is little hope or prospect of their amendment.

Every day's post brought Mr. Desmond letters from his agent and steward, filled with alarming accounts of the increasing tumult and disturbances in his county; many of the houses of his tenants had been attacked, and plundered of arms; threatening notices had been served on all disposed to pay tithes, or take farms at a higher rent than the former tenant paid. The steward stated, that the English bailiffs of several of the gentlemen in the county had received notices to quit their situations or prepare for death, and that he feared he should shortly receive a similar one, from the indications of wrath and ill-will he saw in persons around him.

When Mr. Desmond communicated the contents of these letters to Colonel Forrester, the latter told him that he thought it was their positive duty to return to Ireland, and endeavor, by their presence, to restore tranquillity at least to their own immediate neighborhood. While admitting the propriety of the measure, Mr. Desmond sighed at thinking how little inducement his native country held forth, even to the best-disposed of her gentry, to make it their permanent residence, when he, who had done violence to his taste, in abandoning the society of his English friends and connections from a sense of duty, and never placing himself on the decried list of absentees, found himself no longer beloved or trusted by those to whom he had been an indulgent landlord and kind protector for so many years.

When Mrs. Desmond and Mrs. Forrester were made acquainted with the intention of their husbands to return to Ireland, they declared their determination of accompanying them; though both the gentlemen proposed their continuing in England, being fearful of exposing them to the dangers of a country in a state of turbulence almost bordering on open rebellion, as Ireland was represented to be. The gaieties of London Mrs. Forrester could abandon without a sigh, but she felt the deepest regret at the thought of being separated from Lady Oriel, to whom she had become fondly attached; though she was comforted by the reflection, that they should leave her re-established in society, and her husband no longer suffering from either slights or indignities offered, or supposed to be offered to her.

When the ladies drove to Lady Oriel's to acquaint her with their approaching departure for Ireland, they found her with Lord Oriel, to whom she had been complaining of the fatigues, mental and personal, which she was suffering in consequence of the continued round of gaieties and constant late hours to which she had lately been exposed; and he was admitting that she looked ill and languid, and wanted rest.

No sooner had Mrs. Desmond announced their intended departure, and her deep regret at their approaching separation, with her hope that at some period Lord and Lady Oriel would come to Ireland and see the future estates of their brother, than Lady Oriel, stealing a supplicating glance at her husband, exclaimed, "Oh! how I wish that we were going with you! how delightful to see the Lakes of Killarney, and the fine woods and mountains that dear Frances has been telling me so much about!"

Mrs. Desmond expressed how much gratified her circle would feel at such a visit, and Lord Oriel, to the joy of all, declared his willingness to accompany them to Ireland as soon as they pleased.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

"Wealth is the magic wand that makes all fair,
However foul it might have been before;
It hides deformity, gives youth to age,
Makes dulness bright, and blockheads pass for wits;
Nay, glosses o'er our crimes, and gilds our vices.
There are but two things wealth can never do,
Give happiness, or add one hour to life."

*Old Play.*

It was arranged that Lord and Lady Oriel should accompany the Desmonds and Forresters to Ireland, and that they should leave London in a fortnight, to allow time for having Springmount put in readiness for their reception.

They were all invited to a grand fête at Mr. Vernon's, whose wealth and splendid style of living made him a conspicuous character; who, though sneered at by the beau monde, as *un nouveau riche*, and a parvenu, yet found his dinners, *soirées*, and balls, attended by all the individuals the most *a la mode* in that *beau monde*.

The influence of wealth over those who can never, in any way, benefit by it, is as

extraordinary as it is general; and in no way is this more clearly proved than by the facility with which a supposed *millionnaire* finds himself established in the aristocratic circles in London on something even more than on equal terms; as there is a pretension and purse-proud assumption in a parvenu that leads him to take liberties in retaining the position he has usurped, which a nobleman would never dream of practising.

The *fête* to be given by Mr. Vernon was expected to be the most brilliant of the season, and rumor, with her hundred tongues, was sending forth inflated descriptions of the preparations making for it. Temporary rooms, and new conservatories, were to spring up as if by the hand of enchantment, and all the flowers of all the gardeners around London were commanded: nay, it was almost insinuated that a fine night was also commanded; for what is it that wealth is not supposed capable of accomplishing? and that of Mr. Vernon was boundless.

While all London, which means the fashionable part of it, were anticipating the *fête*, let us take a peep at the givers, and, Asmodeus like, display the feelings that actuated two persons supposed to be amongst the happiest in London, it being the received and established opinion that wealth can buy happiness as well as other rare things. Were the interiors of many a mansion, where riches most abound, laid open to our view, we should discover the fallaciousness of this belief—a belief that forms no part of the creed of those who possess this envied wealth, though many have sacrificed youth, health, and affection to attain it, discovering, alas! too late, that it cannot insure that for which they have toiled.

SCENE—THE MORNING ROOM OF MRS. VERNON.—A CONJUGAL TETE-A-TETE.

"How often must I repeat to you, Mrs. Vernon, that you mar all my projects, by the extreme civility of your manner? I carefully observed your reception of our noble guests yesterday, and blushed for the humility so apparent even in your curtsies. You were so little at your ease, and so thankful to your company, that you appeared more like the hostess of an inn, receiving the gentry of her county, than the mistress of one of the most splendid mansions in London, and the wife of one of the richest capitalists."

"I am sorry," replied Mrs. Vernon meekly, "that I have failed to meet your wishes. I am, as you know, naturally of a timid disposition, and feel myself embarrassed among so many strangers. Besides, not having been in my youth accustomed to such elevated society, I cannot shake off a certain degree of shyness, when I see myself surrounded by persons of such importance, and hear announced the titles of individuals of birth, whom I never expected to know but by the newspapers."

"Pooh, pooh—that is all nonsense; recollect, that if the persons you now mix with have birth and rank to pride themselves on, (and proud and insolent enough are our aristocracy disposed to be, for these advantages,) we have the aristocracy of wealth, which gives power and influence, and which we must make them feel, by receiving their advances with a careless politeness, which shows that we are by no means elated by them, but receive them as a right, not as a concession. My son quoted Bacon to me the other day, as saying that knowledge is power. This I deny; wealth is power; every day proves it; and this, Bacon seems to have known as well as I, or why did he not content himself with knowledge, of which I admit he had a good stock, without seeking wealth by means which, if we believe his contemporaries, were not always strictly honorable?"

"If you allowed me to differ in opinion with you," said Mrs. Vernon, in her usually gentle tone, "I should say that I think our aristocratic friends much less haughty than the generality of our acquaintance. It appears to me, that their positions in society being established, they are not compelled to remind people of their claims, and consequently are more at their ease, and allow others to be more so, than our less elevated associates, who are continually making efforts to retain the places they have usurped."

"You are wrong, quite wrong," replied the obtuse husband. "The very ease you talk of is a proof of their insolent *nonchalance*, as the French call it, and is to me much more offensive than all the self-important airs of the Davisons, Rowlands, and all the other millionaires on whom those great lords and ladies affect to look down, and receive at all their grand parties, only because they are rich. Defend me from the *condescension* of your people of fashion! I know them, Mrs. Vernon, I know them."

"Then why seek them?" asked the wife

quietly. "With your opinion of them, their society cannot contribute to your happiness."

"Will you never understand me, Mrs. Vernon? Why did I toil for years, why risk the fortune so hardly earned, in speculations that might have beggared me, but to gain power, and to confront those proud nobles face to face, making them feel that there is still a higher, prouder aristocracy than theirs, that of *wealth*. Yes, I do make them feel this, and they hate me for it. Those on whose estates I have heavy mortgages, or who have political views which my interest may forward, are all civility. But look at the supercilious politeness of those who stand in neither of the predicaments I have named; observe the affected indifference with which they view my pictures, statues, gold plate, in short, all that in their hearts they covet. And can you then wonder, that though I seek them because their presence administers to my vanity, I detest even while making use of them?"

Mrs. Vernon sighed, but answered not; experience had taught her that her gentle reasoning fell unheeded on the ear of her selfish and wilful husband, or only served to provoke harsh observations on her want of knowledge of the world and proper spirit.

"Recollect, Mrs. Vernon," resumed the husband, "that I will neither have *your* sister nor *my* brother, nor their sons and daughters, invited to our *fête*. This I am decided on; I will have none but the very *élite* of fashion, as the newspapers term it, as nothing is so vexatious as to hear people asking the names of those, they meet nowhere else, and to know that these unknown individuals are our brothers, sisters, nephews, and nieces."

Mrs. Vernon ventured to remark, that were their relations to be seen three or four times, all questions would cease; but her husband casting a half angry, half contemptuous look at her, repeated his decision, that they should not be invited, and quitted the room, leaving his good-natured wife deeply pained at the mortification she must inflict on relations who were dear to her, and whose society constituted her chief enjoyment.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

"Vous demandez comment on fait ces grandes fortunes? c'est parcequ'on est heureux. Dès qu'on est dans le fil de l'eau, il n'y a qu'à se laisser aller."

Mr. Vernon commenced his career as a merchant with a good capital; a cool and calculating head, a heart that had so little influenced his actions, or feelings, that not only his friends, but himself, almost questioned its existence, and a sound stomach, the indulgence of which formed one of his principal sources of enjoyment. He passed the days of his youth untempted and untempting, until chance threw into his path Miss Bosville, the daughter and coheiress of a rich city banker, and to this circumstance, and not to her beauty, accomplishments, or amiable qualities—and she was rich in all these—did she owe the preference that Mr. Vernon professed, when he sought, and, aided by her father's advice, won her hand.

The well-established reputation for exactitude and caution Mr. Vernon had gained in business, joined to his wealth and regularity of conduct, had won the approbation of Mr. Bosville; and as there was nothing disagreeable in his appearance, and as he assumed a softness of manner calculated to please the young and amiable person he sought as a wife, she soon yielded to his suit, and in her twenty-third year became the wife of Mr. Vernon, who was ten years her senior.

With little of the romantic in her feelings, and a less than usual portion of the imagination that falls to her sex, Mrs. Vernon possessed an affectionate disposition, an equal and sweet temper, great good sense, and an undeviating gentleness, joined to a natural timidity, which lent a grace to her manners and rendered her peculiarly formed to make an excellent wife and mother, and to be the focus of attraction and happiness in the domestic circle.

Soon after the marriage of Mrs. Vernon, her sister became the wife of a junior partner in the bank of her father, and continued to move in the unfashionable, but estimable sphere of her early friends; while Mr. Vernon, aided by the large fortune his wife had brought him, extended his commercial connections, and Fortune seemed delighted to shower on him her choicest favors, by realising even more than his hitherto ambitious dreams of wealth.

Years had flown, and each succeeding one had added thousands to the wealth of

Mr. Vernon: he became noted on Change, quoted in the City, a principal sharer in loans, a large landed proprietor, and an influential member of parliament, who would shortly, report stated, be raised to the peerage. He was the father of two sons, both in parliament, and of two daughters, on whom he meant to bestow fortunes that must entitle them to marry with the highest. His house in London was a palace fitted up with all that luxury could invent or wealth command: the finest specimens of art in painting and sculpture were seen at every side; and not only Danaë, but Venus herself, and all the *beau idéals* of mythology, had yielded to the golden shower of this modern corrupter, and left the land of their birth to decorate the walls or niches of the new temple of Plutus.

The *chef-d'œuvres* of Benvenuto Cellini, with all the treasures of the cinque cento, filled his cabinets—treasures that afforded their owner no enjoyment save that of seeing the admiration and envy they excited. Vases of crystal-de-roche, set in enamel, and enriched with sparkling gems; cups of oynx, and jars of lapis lazuli and malachite, with the rich and labored *bijouterie* of the time of Louis the Fourteenth, were disposed on stands of silver and ebony of curious workmanship: while the costly *porcelaine de Sevres*, of Turquoise blue, or the pale rose of Dubary, were scattered through the various suits of rooms, all vouchers of the wealth that had given to their present owner the spoils of the once proud palaces of the Eternal City, of Genoa the Superb, of Venice the Gorgeous and of Florence; of whose merchant princes, the riches, love of display, and ambition of the present possessor of their treasures, reminded one, though not of their taste—for in this Mr. Vernon had no rivalry with the Medici, though master of some of their finest specimens of art—of the excellence that their taste had called forth.

The Library of Vernon House was the *ne plus ultra* of magnificence. Bookcases of carved rose-wood, supported by Corinthian columns of the same precious materials, the capitals and frieze gilt, and crowned by antique busts of or-molu, contained all that ancient or modern literature could offer. Large mirrors, descending from the architraves to the base, reflected the fine proportions of the library, with the gorgeous bindings of the books, and the gilded busts and antique vases filled with the rarest flowers, that were distributed around. Behind the mirrors, which turned on a pivot, maps were arranged, and in recesses beneath, the celestial and terrestrial globes were divided by a fac simile of the Warwick Vase, in pure gold of colossal dimensions, filled with *pot pourri*, breathing of Araby the blest. Tripods of or-molu, bearing candelabres, were placed in front of the mirrors. The curtains were of crimson satin, trimmed with gold bullion fringe and fell in graceful folds to the ground.

The cornices corresponded with and joined the friezes of the bookcases, and, like them, were in alto-relievo, representing subjects from the antique, executed in or-molu: the carpet was made to match the curtains, and its material was so thick that the foot fell unheeded on its surface, enhancing the luxury of the springy elasticity of its touch by its total absorption of sound.

One end of the library opened into an orangery, with a marble fountain by Bermini in the centre, that sent its crystal streams in air; and this again led into an aviary filled with the choicest singing-birds, whose notes mingled with the murmurs of the fountain, and led one to believe that one was far away from the murky atmosphere of London. The windows, were of gold-colored glass, reflecting a glowing radiance, and giving a Claude Lorraine tint to all around.

Wherever the eye rested, it was met by forms of beauty, and tints as various as the rays of a golden sun setting into repose, that filled the soul with delicious musings. The easy chair, the lounging sofa, the Grecian canopy, each with their table on castors, containing all the apparatus of writing, almost tempted the indolent by the facility they offered of describing the ideas the beauty of the scene was so calculated to give birth to. This was a sort of royal road to learning, where luxury wooed the student, presenting all that antiquity can boast to refine and elevate the mind, and all that modern civilisation can afford for the luxuriant indulgence of the person.

Here where genius might have essayed his pinions, and talent conveyed its impressions to ages yet unborn, the man of wealth, the heartless parvenu, made his notes of speculation of thousands to be acquired, influence to be gained, and friends to be left off, the scene possessing no more power over his obtuse nerves, than the obscure counting-house where his ambitious visions first took flight.

Nothing in art can continue to dazzle

but so long as we are unaccustomed to the contemplation of it. Let a person dwell for some months, nay a few weeks, in one of the mansions that has the most struck his fancy, and he will find that by degrees his vision becomes so used to the objects which first enchanted him, that he soon ceases to be sensible of their presence, or to feel aught more than that general complacency excited in the mind by being surrounded by agreeable objects. It is otherwise with the beauties of nature. The more the eye becomes accustomed to behold them, the more pleasure they convey: each point of view gains a new interest by being contrasted with others; the different periods of the day or season change the appearance, and throw a fresh light over the scene, that prevents its ever becoming monotonous.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

L'huitre est malheureuse quand quelque longue maladie fait qu'elle devient perle: c'est précisement le bonheur de l'ambition. MONTESQUIEU.

MR. VERNON had neither grown wiser nor happier with his accession to riches. They opened new fields to his ambition, and, as by degrees he realised the dreams which that encroaching passion had engendered, he found the vista extended to an interminable distance; the most remote point being always the most brilliant and seducing, holding forth hopes that there he might repose, and enjoy the good he had gained. But

"Illusive hope still points to distant good."

A competency was the first object that lent activity to the exertions of Mr. Vernon; this acquired, the prospect of wealth became the next point of attraction. But as wealth is comparative, his ideas on this score enlarged with his means of acquiring it; and he who would have considered himself at the acme of his ambition as master of a plum, had now arrived at thinking himself unlucky as a *millionaire*, unless a coronet glittered on his brow.

But while seeking this imaginary good, a sentiment of dislike and envy to all who possessed hereditary claims to its distinction, was prominent in his breast. He looked on their gaiety as insulting, their coldness as revolting, and their indifference as something not to be borne, at least, until he had gained the first step in the ladder that he meant to climb. He affected in conversation to despise the distinctions of rank, though rank was the sole end and aim of his existence: and yet he has been known to break forth into disbelief and invective, when some person has inadvertently stated the refusal of some very distinguished commoner—some Burdett of the day—to accept the peerage, as if such a refusal was impossible.

Mr. Vernon was so intent in looking forward that he had forgotten to look back, else might he have remembered the former points of his ambition—points that had receded as soon as reached, and were thought of no more. Experience might have taught him, that hitherto success had but excited him to new exertions. But when did man profit by the lessons of experience?

"Man never is, but always to be blest;"

and as long as Hope, Fortune, or Ambition, has a bauble to lure men on, they rarely pause until the grave receives them, and ends their illusions.

This *has* been, and will be the history of man, as long as the genus exists, thinking only of that future that will end but as the past, in disappointment, or that he shall never see. He who calls himself prudent, laughs at the extravagance of the thoughtless dissipator of wealth, who, determined to enjoy to-day lest to-morrow come not for him, spreads around him the enjoyments that gold can procure, and lives to want the comforts that he has bartered for luxuries. This to the prudent man seems madness, or folly; and he says, "I will keep my stores until unbounded riches have given me the means of enjoying all, and then I will indulge to satiety." But he recks not that the sense of enjoyment will then have passed for ever, and that the cup filled by the syren Pleasure can charm no more—Ambition takes the place of Avarice, as Avarice has usurped that of Pleasure, all doomed to the same end—disappointment.

Mr. Vernon felt not that his days were fast fleeting in the pursuit of the imaginary good that had lured him on, and that enjoyment had not yet found him; but he flattered himself, that once elevated to the rank he had so long aspired to, he should enjoy repose when a coronet encircled his brow. But until that wished-for event, uneasy lay the head which anticipated it, though that head was pillowed on down,

and had the supposed sleep-giving consciousness of being the master of countless thousands.

Mr. Vernon possessed a vague idea that perfect happiness was only to be attained by arriving at the fourth step in the peerage; but he tried to stifle this thought, because he felt that his age gave him little chance of accomplishing it, and consoled himself with the hope that, once a lord, his feelings would change, and that he should begin to taste the pleasures he had hitherto put away from him, lest they might interfere with the grand object of his pursuit.

The eldest son of Mr. Vernon resembled his father in selfishness and in ambition. A noble or generous feeling had never had a place in his breast; for egotism, vanity, and conceit had left little room for other passions. With the advantages of having passed his boyhood at Eton—that Macadamiser of hereditary distinctions—he was much less impressed with a respect for rank than was his father. He had approached too near nobility to be imposed on by the false notions adopted by those who see it at a distance; and he found that the Marquesses, Earls, Viscounts, Barons, Lord Johns and Lord Henrys, of the first and second forms, had nothing to distinguish them from their untitled playmates, except what he could little appreciate—an open manliness and good breeding, the effects of that freedom from hauteur and affectation that is, in general, a remarkable characteristic in the ancient nobility.

This close contact with the young scions of aristocracy had taken off Francis Vernon's deference for them, and left him free from prejudices for or against them; but Christ Church, with what he called its invidious distinctions, excited his wrath; and though he liked to lounge on the arm of a tufted collegian, he disliked him for the badge that marked the difference in their birth, and longed for the period that would elevate him to rank and station. His father's well calculated liberality had enabled him to maintain a prominent position at Christ Church: he had the best hunters, the best furnished rooms, gave the most *recherché* dinners the most frequently of any man at Oxford, and piqued himself on having his rooms constantly filled with the *elite* of his circle, which he attributed to the attraction of his society, until a candid friend avowed, in a moment of *abandon*, that he, too, would adopt Vernon's mode of filling his rooms, by placing large mirrors in them—the sure plan of collecting visitors, and the only reflections *a la mode* at Christ Church.

During his visits to the paternal roof in London or in Wiltshire, Francis Vernon was sure to engage some of his titled companions as guests, proud to display to them the unbounded luxury that reigned there, and glad to show his parents and sisters the perfect equality with which he treated the owners of the high-sounding titles that he abridged of their rank in conversation, which never failed to be remarked and rewarded by a complacent smile from his father.

Henry Vernon, two years junior to his brother, resembled his mother in gentleness and amiability, to which he united firmness and decision, with considerable talent and general information.

The sisters were handsome, showy, and accomplished; skilled in all the arts of display, and as ambitious and aspiring, as even their father could desire. They were ready to lend themselves to any scheme to procure their elevation into that third heaven of their imagination—some ducal family.

To accomplish this desirable object, dinners and balls in the season, select parties at Vernon Villa at Richmond, and shooting-parties in the autumn and winter were arranged, to which two latter, none were engaged that could mar the projects of the inviter, or distract the attention of the invited from the objects of attraction held forth to them. Earls had danced and sighed, Viscounts had talked of the happiness of domestic life, and Barons had searched for the hidden shawls, or boas, and assisted the fair owners in enveloping their persons with them, evincing a tender anxiety, indicative of more than common interest, but the Misses Vernons were not to be caught by aught less brilliant than the present possessors or expectants of a Dukedom, and were voted by the aspirants to their favor as very amiable, but rather reserved, which was attributed to the old-fashioned notions inculcated by Madame Mere, instead of to the indifference of the young ladies.

It is thus that vanity accounts for all that might be mortifying to self; and lucky it is that it has such consolation!

## CHAPTER L.

How many in the married state we find
Wedded in person, but divorced in mind.
Mezentius chain'd the living to the dead,
Unnatural union! which has horror bred.
Though but one victim suffer'd from the chain,
While Wedlock gives to *two* an equal pain.
"*Marriage*," *an old Poem.*

Mr. Henry Vernon had acquired riches more slowly than his elder brother, and was content to enjoy them less ostentatiously. Simple in taste and cultivated in mind, he looked on wealth as a means, and not as the end of enjoyment, and really found gratification in the choice works of art and well-chosen library with which he had enriched his spacious and richly-furnished house.

One daughter was the sole offspring of the ill-assorted union of Mr. Henry Vernon with the rich and handsome—or rather let us pay respects to the gifts of Nature, by placing them before that of Fortune, and say, the handsome and rich Miss Oswald. When Mr. H. Vernon wooed and won this lady, he was more attracted by the roses on her cheek, and the lustre in her eye, than by the thousands that composed her dower, or the large expectancies that futurity promised her. She was so young and lovely, that scepticism itself could hardly have doubted that one whose beauty was so calculated to adorn the domestic circle, should sigh for a more extended theatre to exhibit her charms.

Henry Vernon was not the first, and will not be the last man, who discovers that a beautiful exterior may cover a cold and selfish heart. Such discoveries, like all that depend on experience, arrive too late to be of advantage to him who makes them. All are ready to admit this truism: but whoever was willing to profit by the experience of others, though offered ever so much below prime cost? Henry Vernon soon found that he could neither expect a friend nor companion in his wife; and that he must be content to abandon the hopes he had formed of cheerful evenings at home—his expected consolation for long hours of confinement in his counting-house—and return to his solitary hearth, to seek, in the perusal of some new work, to pass the hours wasted by his wife in a round of amusements, which appearing to her to be the sole end of existence, any attempt to interrupt them, only produced reproaches, ill-humor and obstinacy.

The birth of a daughter produced no change in Mrs. Henry Vernon's feelings. The same round of heartless, joyless amusements continued to fill up her time, interrupted by petulant complaints of being left out of Mrs. Vernon's select parties, and expressions of anger and vexation towards her husband for what he could neither avert nor change. Henry Vernon had observed with pain his brother's intentional withdrawal from his society; habits of youthful intimacy had cemented a brotherly affection on his side, which had never been but slightly participated by Mr. Vernon, and which pride and ambition quickly extinguished.

Conscious that he was acting unkindly, he soon began to dislike the sight of his brother, because, by reminding him of his wilful neglect, it became a source of embarrassment and reproach.

It rarely happens when we behave ill towards any one with whom we have lived on terms of affection that dislike towards that person does not ensue; and the less excuse we find in our own hearts for our unkindness, the more strongly do we entertain the dislike. We begin by being unkind, and we end by being unjust and cruel; and it is well if we confine ourselves to feelings, and do not commit actions which wounded conscience will surely, though too late, avenge.

Mrs. Vernon felt a sincere friendship and respect for her brother-in-law, whose society was so agreeable to her taste, as to induce her to submit without a murmur to that of his wife, which was far from being congenial to her. She saw wih regret her husband's cold and unbrotherly wish of withdrawing from any thing more than an occasional intercourse, and felt pain at each interview, on observing the undiminished kindness of Henry Vernon's manner, which seemed like a tacit avowal that he knew there was no want of affection on *her* part; while the offended air and angry insinuations of his wife embarrassed and annoyed her.

But if Mrs. Vernon felt pained at being compelled to withdraw from the intimacy of her brother-in-law's family, how much more deeply did she feel at being forced to confine her intercourse with a loved and only sister to occasional visits formal dinners once or twice in the season, and now and then an affectionate *tête-a-tête*, when both felt anxious to conceal from the other the consciousness that their intercourse was limited, and marked this consciousness by a careful avoidance of any reference to the innumerable dinners, balls and routs, the accounts of which so constantly filled up the columns of the "Court Jour-

nal," where the "fashionable," or "elegant" Mrs. Vernon generally headed some leading-article in the list of fashionable intelligence.

With that fine tact peculiar to women, and which always exists in proportion to the warmth of heart and delicacy of the person possessing it, Mrs. Burrell, the sister of Mrs. Vernon, had early observed the line of conduct Mr. Vernon had forced his wife to adopt, and that which she herself must follow, to save her affectionate and sensitive sister from additional pain. Mrs. Burrell, therefore, avoided all allusion to the infrequency of their intercourse and contented herself with showing an increased affection in her manner when they met.

By this delicacy, Mrs. Vernon was saved the pang of thinking, that while obeying the harsh mandates of a husband, she had either wounded, or lost a sister's heart; and the soft and continued pressure with which she retained that sister's hand in hers marked how gratefully she felt this forbearing tenderness to her feelings.

Less tact on either side must have led to most painful scenes. Temper, good-nature and affection, though precious in themselves, must fail to insure the happiness of those dear to us unless we also possess tact, the invaluable gift which is the true panacea that sweetens the cup of life, founded on forbearance, itself a virtue. Tact enables us to avoid wounding, and to repel wounds; it is the sure indicator of goodness, as well as refinement; for though the latter lends additional charms to its practice, it is the former that gives birth to it. Tact, like genius, must be inherent; and cultivation only does for one what it does for the other, polishes and refines both but cannot create either.

I refer not to that spurious tact, the offspring of society nursed by policy and educated by deception, which enables people who dislike, or are indifferent to each other, to meet without any excitement or betrayal of angry feelings; to show interest where none is experienced, and to avoid all occasions of touching on disagreeable subjects. This, I admit, is best acquired in an intercourse with polished society; but the tact I worship, is that which springs from the sensitive mind, with all the bland influences of kindness, blessed and blessing, the full grown offspring of goodness. This tact precludes the necessity of speech: a look suffices: a pressure of the hand, or total silence is often more eloquent than all that language could express—

> "El silentio ancor suole
> Haver prieghi e parole."

Mr. Burrell, with all his wife's affectionate nature, wanted her philosophy; he felt mortified, not for himself, but her, at seeing her left out at all the brilliant *fêtes* given by the Vernons; and when their acquaintance with that want of perception so remarkable in a certain class, dwelt on the newspaper descriptions of such *fêtes*, and appealed to Mrs. Burrell for the particulars, the embarrassed looks and heightened color of his wife, who was only embarrassed because she felt what was passing in his mind, increased his displeasure.

Mr. Burrell was justly proud of his wife; he was aware of her merits; he had been accustomed to see her looked up to and respected by all his friends; and as his fortune and position were highly respectable, he was shocked and humiliated at finding her unappreciated by her brother-in-law: and secretly accused her sister of a want of respect for her, or a want of spirit in vindicating what was due to herself, in thus tamely submitting to the imperious and unnatural dictation of her selfish and worldly-minded husband.

## CHAPTER LI.

> Oh! we do all offend—
> There's not a day of wedded life, if we
> Count at its close the little, bitter sum
> Of thoughts, and words, and looks unkind and froward,
> Silence that chides, and woundings of the eye—
> But, prostrate at each other's feet, we should
> Each night forgiveness ask.
>
> Conjugal life, as all who've tried can tell,
> Must bear affinity to heaven or hell.
>
> *Modern Hudibras.*

Mr. Burrell was the father of two sons and a daughter; his elder son was pursuing his travels previously to his entrance into parliament, and his second was lately gazetted in the Guards. Both were promising young men, natural and unaffected, fondly attached to their parents and to each other, and loving their sister with all that affection which a handsome and most amiable young woman is so calculated to excite in the breasts of brothers only two years her senior. She had been their playfellow in infancy, and was now the object of their fond interest and protec-

tion. Charles Burrell wrote to her detailed accounts of all he saw in his travels; purchased for her all that he thought she would like; and William made her the confidant of all his pleasures and troubles, the latter of light import and brief duration—while her father and mother looked on her as the sweetener of their existence, whose gaiety and unclouded gentleness shed all the blessings of a perpetual spring and sunshine over their lives.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Vernon and their daughter were in the library, waiting the announcement of dinner, the mistress of the mansion looking over the columns of "The Morning Post," where she saw the notice of the coming *fête* of Mrs. Vernon, with the programme of the intended amusements. Her brow curved, her eyes flashed, and her cheek assumed a deeper red as she perused the paper and recollected that she was not bidden to the pageant. She was about to express the angry feelings big within her breast, when the *maitre d'hotel* announcing that dinner was served, compelled her to restrain the expression, though she did not conquer the anger.

Mr. H. Vernon was too well versed in the temper of his wife not to observe the indications of a coming storm; and his daughter had witnessed too many, not to have a foreboding of an approaching one. The presence of the servants imposed a restraint that was evidently borne with impatience by the mistress of the house, who cast from time to time angry glances at her husband, as she saw him help himself to some fresh *plat*, which, she had sagacity enough to discover, was done to prolong the dinner, and retard the disagreeable scene which he anticipated.

Her patience became exhausted, when, at the second course, after scarcely more than tasting two or three of the *intremets*, he commenced mixing sugar, oil, and vinegar, for some brawn, and she angrily observed, that he seemed unusually disposed to eat. Mr. H. Vernon answered, that he was rather hungry—and felt his color heightened at the consciousness of the want of truth of his reply, no less than at the tone of the remark that produced it.

"You bid fair, to-day," said his wife, with one of her most spiteful looks, "to rival a certain friend of ours, who certainly resembles a zoophyte, in having a stomach but no brains."

This observation Mr. H. Vernon had more than once heard his wife apply to his brother, and he was thankful she had not, on the present occasion, *named* him before the servants; but, fearing some more open explosion of her anger, he sent away his untasted brawn, and became almost as anxious as herself for the disappearance of the domestics—such was his dread of any exhibition before them!

They had no sooner left the room than Mrs. Vernon asked her husband, whether he had seen the notice of the *fête* to be given by his sister-in-law; and, ere he could reply, she demanded how long he intended to support the cool impertinence of his relations, in thus passing them over: for her part, she would no longer submit to it; adding, that it was all his fault for not asserting what was due to her, if not to himself, and for not making some exertion to extend the circle of their acquaintance into the fashionable coteries, to which Mrs. Vernon had gained access, and for which she (Mrs. H. Vernon) was a much more eligible candidate, than her silent, frightened-looking sister-in-law.

She then commented on the *brusquerie* of Mr. Vernon, the insipidity of his wife, the flippancy and airs of his daughters, and the insolent nonchalance of the eldest son—"All of which," calmly observed her husband, "proves that we are happy in not living more frequently in their society."

The anger of the lady blazed afresh at this reasonable remark. She said she wanted not their society—nay, she hated it, but she wanted to take her proper place at their fashionable parties, among the people of high rank who frequented them.

Long experience had taught Henry Vernon the utter uselessness of reasoning with his willful wife, and he rarely attempted a reply, except to avoid incurring her increased anger by the charge, often repeated, that his silence was an impertinent display of contempt towards her. He had tried to make her sensible how undignified it would be for them to show that they were mortified by the neglect of his brother; and always recommended the maintenance of a distant but civil intercourse between the families. Such representations and recommendations had little effect; he was accused of want of proper spirit—a favorite phrase with angry ladies—and was constantly forced to bear, or forbear, in the angry discussions, replete with bitter sarcasms, to which each new grand *fête* of his brother's gave rise.

Henry Vernon passed in the circle of his acquaintance as one who was governed by his wife: the men called him henpecked, and the women quoted Mrs. H.

Vernon as an example of a clever person, who knew how to manage her husband.

It is thus that people often judge: the married individual who has the misfortune to have an incorrigible partner, is called weak because he submits to what cannot be remedied, though his submission evinces his superior strength of mind; while the incorrigible person, who is endured as an incurable evil, is called clever, because she destroys her own happiness, and interrupts that of all around her, by the indulgence of a bad temper and false view of subjects, incompatible with cleverness, in the proper acceptation of the word.

If we reflect on all the examples of husbands or wives that have been most governed, we shall find that the *submitting* party was the most clever, and the governing one the most weak; unless, where the latter was so gentle that the sway was not apparent, the person following the poet's *beau ideal* of the wife

"Who never answers till her husband cools,
And though she rules him, never shows she rules."

A jealousy of being governed, and a desire of governing, are in general most frequently to be found in weak minds of both sexes; and this love of rule joined to obstinacy, another characteristic of feeble intellect, renders such persons so incorrigible, that passive forbearance is all that remains to a husband or wife, so unhappily "paired, but not matched." Let not, however, persons so borne with rejoice in the belief that they are clever, but be thankful to the strength that yields to their weakness.

Mary Vernon had naturally a quick temper, but the painful experience of the evils which her mother's violence produced, had taught her to correct it, without impairing that sensitiveness and vivacity which generally accompany quickness of temper. We have described the minds, but not the persons, of some of our characters: this latter we must now attempt—and as Mary Vernon is before us, we will begin with her.

She was in her eighteenth year, rather above than below the middle size, slight and elegantly formed, and possessing that roundness without which female symmetry cannot exist. Her complexion was exquisitely fair—that fairness which peculiarly belongs to very dark-haired women; her cheeks slightly tinged with the rose of health, and her lips of the rich crimson that made her white and regular teeth look still more brilliant. Her face was perfectly oval; her eyes a deep blue, shaded by silken eyelashes of raven hue, and surmounted by brows whose long and jetty arches added beauty to her fair and open forehead. Her hair, at a little distance, appeared to be black, but was of a rich brown, possessed of that golden reflection which is as rare as it is beautiful; her arms, hands, and feet might have served as models to the sculptor, and finished a form as graceful as symmetry, youth, and health could make it. Add to all this, a countenance varying and full of expression, and Mary Vernon is before you, gentle or ungentle reader.

Yet methinks I hear you say, "Why she is, then, that faultless monster (of beauty) that the world ne'er saw; for, as yet, all that has been described is perfect." But, alas! the beauty of Mary Vernon, like all earthly beauty, was imperfect; as all her female friends declared her nose to be *un peu retroussé*, and her lips a little too full—two faults that none of her male friends could ever be brought to admit, though often assailed on the subject, with that pertinacity displayed by ladies in their love of truth, and their wish of making male converts to the justice of their opinions.

On no subject is the discrimination of women more visible than on that of female beauty. A blemish that might have for ever escaped the eye of man, (nay, such is the blindness of mankind on such points, might have appeared to him as something attractive,) is at one glance detected by the quick perception of a woman; and with the kind wish of extending her discoveries, is made known to most of her male friends. This, which we call her love of truth and candor, is, by the ill-natured world, stigmatised as jealousy or envy, two feelings which we, who know the gentle sex maintain to be foreign to their natures.

Mary Vernon was a good musician, had a clear and sweet, though not a powerful, voice; excelled in painting, and possessed a knowledge of the elements of all the sciences necessary to form a rational and accomplished companion.

No wonder, then, that with so many personal and mental attractions, she was generally admired, and already refused more than one eligible offer for her hand. It was some lurking fear of the superiority of her charms drawing attention from, or provoking comparisons with, those of his daughters, that influenced her selfish uncle, almost as much as his false pride in exclu-

ding her from his fashionable reunions—an exclusion that was by no means disagreeable to the two young ladies, who felt no strong predilection for their beautiful cousin.

There were two people in Carlton Gardens, where the town mansion of Mr. Vernon was situated, who partook not of his or his daughter's feelings of indifference to Mary Vernon; nay, who felt for her a more than common interest and affection: these were Mrs. Vernon and her second son, who had long learned to estimate their charming relation. The son scarcely viewed her in the light of a cousin, owing to the restricted intercourse of the families, which had produced a more tender, though less familiar acquaintance between them.

There is nothing so destructive to love as the familiarty that is engendered by constant intercourse in youth: this destroys illusions, and establishes a sort of sisterly or brotherly relation, that precludes other sentiments between the parties. It is the reverse in more matured age: persons so thrown together, form attachments that become strengthened by habits of intimacy, that render them indispensable to each other, even after passion has removed the veil which had at first blinded them. Providence has wisely ordained, that habit should replace other and dearer ties, as a compensation for the decrease of passion—that fever of the heart and mind, which, followed by re-action, produces indifference, and all the somniferous train of feelings, or want of feelings, that form such a dreary contrast to the brilliant dreams from which the heart has awakened. Providence, that all-wise director of all, has decreed, that each season of life should have its own peculiar charm, and has given us habit in our more mature age, to atone for the loss of the more passionate enjoyments of our youth. Habit it is which inures us to what was at first disagreeable, softens down what was harsh, and makes us feel our own insufficiency, by teaching us to depend for happiness on others.

Ask those who have spent years together, perhaps often breaking forth into murmurs at their mutual defects, if they would change their partners for all the perfection that imagination creates to mock reality, and they will say, or they will feel, that such a separation would be insupportable, as *habit*, that forger of strongest chains, has riveted theirs too indissolubly to be divided, except by death.

## CHAPTER LII.

What is the aim and end of spinsters' lives,
But to be made rich, great, and titled wives?
*Modern Hudibras.*

"It is too ridiculous," said Miss Vernon to her sister, "that mamma should make no exertion to get us asked to the Duchess of Deloraine's ball. It might be easily managed, knowing, as we do, half the people with whom the Duchess is most intimate: but mamma will do nothing, and papa seems for once paralysed, as he is deaf to all the hints I have given him. The Marquis of Tadcaster has asked me ten times if we go there, and, not liking to own that we were not invited, I gave no positive answer. He has lately become more marked in his attentions; and this ball might have decided something. He is going immediately after to Scotland; and, once there, who can say when we shall see him again?"

"I assure you," answered Louisa, "that I am quite as vexed as you are; for I see the horrid perspective before us of a winter in the country, without the chance of forming any thing like a desirable alliance; and, as we have now been out four seasons—that is to say, you have been four and I three—it is quite time that we were settled. However, I am sure I have no chance until you are married; and I must say, that I think you have waited long enough for a dukedom, and that it would be wise to catch at the first coronet that is supported by plenty of green acres, instead of doing penance at home."

There was something unpalatable in the observations of Louisa Vernon to the vain and irritable feelings of her sister, and their conversations on marriage, the subject that most interested them, seldom concluded without the excitement of angry feelings. The vanity of both prevented their acknowledging the wounds inflicted; but these rankled not the less, and the young ladies were most anxious to succeed in their matrimonial speculations, no less for the sake of the splendid establishments they contemplated, than for the wish of triumphing over each other.

Mrs. Vernon saw with sorrow, that worldly feelings had blighted all the sentiments of natural affection in the breasts of her daughters. In vain she tried to lead them back; for the path of nature, like that of virtue, once lost, is difficult to be regained, and like it, is only discovered with repentance for a guide. The gene-

rous and affectionate heart of the mother was chilled by the cold and calculating selfishness of her daughters; and they looked on her as *une bonne bourgeoise*, who had little knowledge of the world that they worshipped, and who could in no way assist their projects.

As the *fête* drew near, they felt the necessity of bringing their admirers to a decided declaration, and determined to spare no pains to effect so desirable an end. Louisa's experience of three unsuccessful seasons had discouraged her ambitious hopes, and she had reasoned herself into the conviction, that, after all, a person might be very happy as a countess; a conviction that the attentions of Lord Durnford had considerably helped to bring about.

In the appearance of the Misses Vernon there was nothing to distinguish them from any other of the good-looking young ladies of fashion of the day. They were what might be called handsome; but their countenances were so little expressive of any of the qualities that fix sympathy or affection, that after one had allowed that they were good-looking, and had a certain air of fashion, an air as distinct from that which distinguishes high birth and high breeding, as is the false diamond from the brilliant gem it is made to copy—there was little else to be said. Beauty depends much more on expression than on feature, as all must have remarked, who have seen plain features redeemed by that soul-beaming expression, which leaves the impression of beauty, or "something than beauty dearer," behind, bringing back faces to memory, the details of which might not support a strict scrutiny, but the *tout ensemble* of which captivated.

## CHAPTER LIII.

"A *fête* is one of the many palliatives for that common malady *ennui*, and, like most palliatives, gives but a temporary relief, generally followed by a return of the disease."

The long looked-for *fête* to be given by Mr. Vernon at length arrived, and was ushered in by torrents of rain, which poured from an early hour in the day, and continued without intermission, as if to prove to him, a truth he had lately seemed to doubt, namely, that gold cannot command all things. The temporary rooms, not formed to "bide the pelting of the pitiless storm," became inundated; and temples draped with pale rose and celestial blue, ere half the day was over, were only fit to receive Naïades, and were totally inapplicable to the terrestrial nymphs and swains for whom they were arranged. Galleries and kiosks crumbled "like the baseless fabric of a vision," leaving many a wreck behind; and had Mr. Vernon contemplated the novel exhibition of a Naumachia for the amusement of his guests, he might have easily contrived to accomplish it, so plentiful was the supply of water on the leads, and in the garden, where the *fête* was to have displayed its greatest attractions. Triumphal arches lay prostrate on the earth, burying in their fall the rich and rare plants and flowers imported from all the nurseries round London; and fragments of silk draperies, mingled with garlands of artificial roses, were seen borne along the yellow streams that urged their turbid course through all the walks in this lately beautiful garden. Variegated lamps were tossing in the breeze on the dripping branches that supported them; and the drenched flowers, half covered with mould and gravel, gave an air of desolation and ruin, that seemed to warn *millionaries* how soon the elements may dissipate the fruits of their riches.

Mr. Vernon viewed the scene of destruction from his dressing-room window, and as he saw the snowy and rose-colored petals of the camelia japonicas and the blossoms of the other rare plants of his conservatory, hurried along by the hurricane, he bethought him of the truth of the proverb, that "riches can make unto themselves wings to fly away." He moralised, not on the power of Nature, but on the probable cost which this ill-timed freak of hers would entail upon him; and the dire necessity, of receiving the guests of the evening in the splendid salons of his mansion instead of, *al fresco*, in the temples and gardens on which he had expended such vast sums, to astonish, if not to delight the beholder.

The young ladies were still more annoyed by the unpropitious storm. They, unlike their papa, calculated not the expense, but the results of the destruction of the garden. They had contemplated all the possibilities of well managed *tête-à-tetes* with their respective admirers; the most judicious modes of eliciting declarations; and a fine night, and the silver moon shedding her radiance over all that luxury and wealth could combine, were considered as essential requisites in the stage decorations of the act of the comedy they

intended to represent. An unusual softness of manner might be assumed, in a scene where Nature is exhibited as Nature is seen in a ballet; forced flowers and rare exotics might serve as symbols of tenderness to lovers themselves, the productions of the hot-beds of London fashionable forcing frames; and a thousand half sentences, "looks, and becks, and wreathed smiles," might be given to encourage languid admirers, beneath the glow of variegated lamps, and on the velvet of a green lawn, that would lose all charm in the blaze of the ball-room, with the feet gliding over the chalked floor, and the eyes dazzled all around by splendor and the heart gladdened by gaiety. No! in a ball-room, no *role* but that of the brilliant *danseuse* could with propriety be played; and the only chance left was a stroll through the suite of apartments, when the languor of fatigue and heat might furnish a pretext for sighing for the country, regretting being pent up in London, and envying the supposed admirer, who would be so happy in Scotland, or wherever else his ennui might tempt him to go.

Now that they could not sport it on the light fantastic toe in the garden, it would be necessary to change the costumes prepared, *en peu en Bergere a l'Opéra*, for something more analogous to the gilded salons in which the fete would be held. Aigrettes of diamonds must be substituted for wreaths of flowers, and robes embroidred in pearls, must take the place of diaphané gauze, with bouquets of lilies of the valley and roses.

Mr. Vernon, while his young ladies were attending to the momentous change of their decorations, was ordering a double supply of wax-candles to be scattered through the suite of salons, that a blaze of light, emulating the sun itself, should illuminate the chef-d'œuvres of art that enriched their walls.

The company assembled at the usual hour—the usual faces, dresses, and smiles, were exhibited; the usual affectation of not being pleased shown off, as if each had agreed that it was indecorous, or at least vulgar to appear gratified at what was meant to give gratification, (the *nil admirari* being one of the adopted secrets of fashionable non-entity most generally followed,) and the usual nothings were repeated.

Lord Albany joined Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester, and amused them with his piquant remarks on the scene and on the principal actors on it.

"Do you see Lady Danvers?" said he; "she is getting herself up in her *role* of a woman of fashion, but she is not calculated to fill the part well."

"Is it then so difficult a part?" interrogated Mrs. Forrester.

"*Cela dépend*," replied Lord Albany: "to you ladies nothing appears so easy, and nothing is so easy; *mais*, Lady Danvers finds it terrible up-hill work; she wants to be an influential leader, the female Grey, Wellington, or Canning, of fashionable, instead of political life; and, *hélas!* she is only formed to be the Billy Holmes; which means the whipper-in; and between a leader and a whipper-in in fashionable life there is as great a difference as in political. I could give a receipt to make a woman of fashion, if I saw a meritorious debutante for the part; but I should as soon think of giving Ude's instructions how to dress a *salmi de becassine* to an under-housemaid, as my receipt to Lady Danvers; neither would do justice to them."

"Pray let us be favored with your rules," said Lady Oriel; "and as we are going to rusticate in Ireland, there is no chance of our abusing the favor, by any clumsy attempts at the part."

"I must again remind you, Mesdames," said Lord Albany, "that to give *you* a receipt to make a woman of fashion, would be to 'gild refined gold, or paint the lily;' but if you command me to state what I should recommend to others, you shall be obeyed, the more readily that my woman of fashion must not be less than fifteen years your senior. Suppose a lady highly born, and higly bred, (mind, I don't say well bred,) of at least thirty-five years old, married to a man of rank and large fortune. Beauty is of no importance; but strong nerves are indispensable, as without these sinews of war, a leader of fashion cannot succeed. A good *tournure* is highly necessary, and a practical knowledge of French and Italian cannot be dispensed with. The lady must have natural vivacity, and acquired self-command to control any unseemly ebullition of it; she must have tact without talent, that is to say, she must not excel in conversation, writing, music, or any of the accomplishments that require talent, as excellence in any of them would occupy too much of that precious time, which her duties as a woman of fashion require. Society is to be considered the end and aim of her life. Dinners, balls, and routs, the only things that come home to our business and bosoms; and all

else, as insignificant and unworthy of attention. Politics, by which I mean a superficial view of the feuds of faction; must be familiar to her; and she must make up in warmth of zeal, for all she wants in real comprehension of the questions agitated by the Guelphs and Ghibelines of our day. A strict attention to *la mode* is necessary; a lavish expenditure on her person, and a prudent regard to economy in all other disbursements are recommended. A consciousness of superiority and power, with a philosophical indifference to the means employed to obtain it, and a stoical disregard to the feelings of others, is to be cultivated, and the exclusive system, that *sainte alliance* of the *haut ton*, is never to be abandoned. Beauty, wit, and talent, are to be voted unnecessary, or *de trop;* and power is to be retained *coute qui coute.* All without the pale of her own circle are to be considered *mauvais ton*, and those unknown to her as being unknowable. She is to cultivate an intimacy with the leading ambassadresses, render useful the received Corypheuses of fashion, and employ as her creatures the tolerated. One or two political leaders must be fixed at her receptions, as *habitués*, and their satellites are to be encouraged. Fashion is to be considered as the true object of a laudable ambition, and all else as accessories of little importance. Place this lady in a large and elegantly-furnished mansion in St. James's, Grosvenor, or Berkley Square, give her a villa near town to which she may retire with a chosen few of her clique during the summer, and a fine family seat in the country, where she may hold her state in the winter, surrounded by the magnates of the land, with a sprinkling of foreigners of distinction; dress her head *a la* Herbault, her bust *a la* Victorine, her feet *a la* Melnotte, and serve her up, with plenty of diamonds and pearls, and you will have a woman of fashion."

The ladies laughed at the gravity with which Lord Albany repeated the receipt, and agreed that it would be thrown away on Lady Danvers.

## CHAPTER LIV.

"Concealment is too frequently the consequence of guilt, not to be often mistaken for it."

Lady Oriel had been talking to a group who were looking at a picture by Titian, in the gallery at Vernon House, when the sound of a voice familiar to her struck on her ear; she turned to look, and found the eyes of Lord Delmore fixed on her with a steadfast gaze. The impressions which the sight of him conveyed, were so mingled with all of pain and humiliation she had ever known, that she felt a sudden faintness come over her; but, though ready to sink to the earth, she subdued every external symptom of emotion; and, affecting not to have seen him, walked to another room.

This was the first time they had met since her return to town. She had seen in the papers that he had gone to Italy, and hoped he would remain there, until time had enabled her to lose the poignant sense of her own imprudence which every recollection of him called up. She had learned to judge his artful conduct with the same sincerity and severity with which she analysed her own, and the arts by which he had so successfully compromised her in the eyes of her mutual acquaintances, being now unveiled, excited her indignation and contempt.

How did she rejoice that Lord Oriel was not with her at this rencontre, as his presence, and the consciousness of the scrutiny with which he would examine her countenance, would have increased her agitation. She proposed to Mrs. Forrester to retire; and, seeing Colonel Forrester at that moment enter from the House of Lords, where he had been to hear a debate, they both requested him to call their carriage, and left Mr. Vernon's house.

Lady Oriel reflected with pleasure that in a very few days she should leave London, and trusted that she should not again meet Lord Delmore. She hesitated whether she ought to tell Lord Oriel of the meeting or not; and, with the candor and delicacy natural to her, determined on doing so; but, after a little reflection, she thought that the mention of Lord Delmore's name from her lips would conjure up such a host of painful reminiscences in the sensitive mind of her husband, that she had not courage to introduce the subject.

Here again the too susceptible nature of Lord Oriel led to mischief, because it was the cause of his wife's concealing from him her rencontre with Lord Delmore; a circumstance which, though trivial in itself, and which might naturally be expected to take place, he had not contemplated, from his believing that individual to be abroad; and though he would cer-

tainly have been pained at her telling him the fact, his was a temper to be deeply offended by her concealment of it.

The first circumstance that leads to the necessity of a concealment between man and wife, gives the color to their future happiness. How often do concealments proceed from the fear of wounding a susceptible mind, or exciting an irritable temper! and when once a habit of dissimulation is established, the purity of conjugal affection is destroyed, though the affection itself may continue in all its pristine force. A delicate-minded woman, or a sensitive man, discovering that even a trivial concealment has been practised, feels confidence impaired, and suspicion awakened; the real motives are seldom examined, for people are not willing to believe themselves too susceptible, or irritable, and would be offended at the supposition were it made to them. But as it is easier to act with candor than to conquer either disposition or temper, we have no hesitation in advising all husbands and wives to avoid concealment if they wish to preserve happiness, and not be deterred from a statement of facts by the fear of present annoyance, which leaves a much lighter impression than is made by a future discovery of them.

There is something repugnant to the delicacy of affection in the consciousness that heads which repose on the same pillow should be occupied by thoughts which they dare not utter. Lady Oriel felt this the night of the fête, and affected to be asleep when Lord Oriel entered her room, to avoid a conversation in which she could not name the disagreeable meeting that even then agitated her nerves and wounded her feelings.

"When," thought she, with bitterness, "will the effects of my folly cease to rise up in judgment against me? It is to it I owe the susceptibility on my husband's part that renders concealment necessary."

The Abbé de Chaulieu observed of Fontenelle, that he had the most kindness and the least feeling of any man he had ever known. This observation showed a profound knowledge of human nature; for though it may appear a paradox, it is nevertheless true, that persons the most remarkable for general kindness are those who have the least feeling; deep feeling being always accompanied by an inequality of humor, that often precludes habitual kindness; while the absence of feeling leaves us masters of ourselves, and ready to show those acts of civility that are gratifying to the receiver, and cost little to the giver.

Lord Oriel was an exemplification of the incompatibility of the two; for no man possessed more feeling, and its excess produced the effect of want of kindness, by rendering him irritable when he most wished to be kind. A woman of less delicacy of mind than his wife, might have corrected this exuberant and unhealthy action of feeling, by an exposure to him of the pain it occasioned her; but Lady Oriel attributed his morbid sensibility entirely to her own errors, and supported the sufferings it inflicted with the patience of a martyr.

Lord Oriel had intended going from the House of Lords to the fête at Mr. Vernon's, but, having been detained later than he expected, he concluded, from seeing many carriages leaving Carlton Gardens, that Lady Oriel had left it. He stopped at White's to look at the evening papers, and was reading one, his face shaded partly by the paper, when Lord Tadcaster and some other young men walked in, and gave a description of the fête.

"Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester were the prettiest women there," observed Lord Tadcaster; "and so Delmore seemed to think, for he never took his eyes off the first, who blushed very becomingly when she caught his eyes fixed on her face."

The observations ended here, and it seemed to Lord Oriel as if some one had pointed him out to Lord Tadcaster, and so stopped any further remark. He felt his cheeks glow with rage and shame: at one moment he felt disposed to call Lord Tadcaster to account for having named Lady Oriel, and the next he thought, that as nothing positively offensive had been said, such a step would only excite fresh scandal, and revive the former.

He was one of the last to leave White's, as he felt too much agitated to confront the persons he must pass to leave the room; and in driving home, his mind was in a chaos, that made him dread an interview with his wife. Would she tell him of the meeting? To name it, would be opening afresh old wounds, that both were anxious not to touch; but *not* to tell him would be still worse, as denoting a want of confidence in herself and him too.

Anxious as he was to ascertain how Lady Oriel would act on this occasion, he was relieved by finding her, as he imagined, asleep; and as he looked on her beautiful face, with the silken fringe of her raven eyelashes resting on the delicate

rose-colored cheeks, he breathed a prayer that no tear might leave its trace on those fair cheeks, and laid his head on his pillow, to seek in sleep an oblivion of the painful feelings that, during the last two hours, had been passing through his mind.

But sleep pressed not his weary eyelids, for thought after thought, and all connected with Lord Delmore, presented themselves. Did Lady Oriel know of his arrival in London when she proposed the visit to Ireland? Why was she so afraid of meeting him? Alas! he was growing unjust and suspicious to his own Frances. He felt his injustice, but he had no longer the power of checking it. If, however, she told him, as she would be sure to do on the morrow, that she had met Lord Delmore, all would be well; but if not, he dared not think of the consequences.

Little did he imagine that she who occupied all his thoughts was as wakeful, and nearly as agitated as himself, and from nearly the same cause. All her self-reproach had again been excited by the train of thought her interview with Lord Delmore had called up. His presence would revive the former scandal; her husband would again become susceptible and unhappy; restraint would take place of the confidence beginning to be re-established between them; and all this was the consequence of her past levity and imprudence. She suppressed the sighs that labored in her breast, lest her husband should suspect she was not asleep; but he, who believed her in slumber, gave a free vent to his, every one of which struck on her ear as a knell of departing happiness, and reproached her for being the cause.

To a refined and sensitive mind, there is no suffering that falls so heavily on the heart as the consciousness of having inflicted unhappiness on those dear to us. Our own tears or sighs relieve the grief they spring from; but those we cause, fall back with bitterness on our breasts, and fill us with remorse and anguish. To have trifled with our own peace of mind, appears light in comparison with the complicated guilt of having destroyed that of one who loved and trusted us; and Lady Oriel felt that a woman who has been careless of her reputation, thereby wounding her husband's honour in its most tender point, can never more hope for that uninterrupted confidence which forms the only solid basis on which the happiness of married life can be built. Her heart melted within her, as she thought over the pangs she had inflicted on the noble and generous breast beside her; and she could have wept over him, if she dared, as all the past came in review before her.

## CHAPTER LV.

"Suspicion is a heavy armor, and
With its own weight impedes more than it protects."

Lady Oriel left her chamber ere her husband awoke, and when they met at the breakfast-table, both labored under a constraint that each endeavored, but in vain, to hide. A consciousness of something to be concealed pressed on the spirits of the wife, and a knowledge that something *was* concealed, wounded the feelings of the husband.

Those whose susceptibility or irritability force their connections to the painful necessity of concealment, are precisely those who are most offended by it. With all Lord Oriel's natural goodness of heart and delicacy of mind, it never occurred to him, that his wife's silence on the subject of her interview with Lord Delmore, proceeded wholly from the excess of her affection for himself, making her dread the idea of giving him pain. A less refined mind than hers would neither have anticipated the chagrin which the mention of Delmore's name would occasion him, nor have committed the error of having any concealment on the subject. But here were two people, fondly, warmly attached to each other, frittering away their happiness from a too great similarity of dispositions and a too great refinement of ideas. A little less on either side might have saved them both from much misery; but circumstances had, unfortunately, tended to increase their morbid sensibility, and they were now paying the penalty.

"How passed off the fête?" asked Lord Oriel. "I was on the point of searching you there, when I saw so many carriages coming away that I concluded you had left. The ball was very brilliant and agreeable?"

"Nothing remarkable," replied Lady Oriel. "On the whole, I thought it went off heavily, as the fêtes at Mr. Vernon's generally do. He walks about with such an air of demanding admiration for his house, his furniture, his pictures, and all that is his, that it makes one feel less disposed to accord it; and then he seems so dissatisfied that his guests are not surpri-

sed or *éblouis* by his grandeur, that it makes many of them take a spiteful pleasure in affecting a nonchalance, even greater than they feel."

Lord Oriel asked other questions; but still Lady Oriel mentioned not Lord Delmore, and he felt every moment more discomposed by her concealment. At length he arose from the table, and affecting a careless air, observed—"I heard another version of the fête from Lord Tadcaster, at White's, where I stopped to look over the evening papers. He mentioned having seen Lord Delmore there."

Lady Oriel felt the blood rush up to her very forehead, from the consciousness of the false interpretation her husband might put on her concealment of this fact; and her blushing reminded him of Lord Tadcaster's remark on the subject.

"By the by," said he, with an air of pique Lady Oriel had never seen him exhibit before, "it will be absolutely necessary for you, either to give up going into society where you are likely to meet him, or to conquer the habit of blushing at his presence or at the mention of his name. Lord Tadcaster commented last night on your blushing most becomingly when you caught Lord Delmore's eyes fixed on you; and you must be aware that nothing can be so likely to convey a false impression as your betraying any symptom of consciousness with regard to him."

There was something in the tone and manner with which this was said that deeply wounded Lady Oriel. She felt that she was misunderstood; and her pride and delicacy, but above all, her affection, was wounded.

Lord Oriel left the room, leaving her to shed tears, almost as bitter as those he had removed from her eyes some months before; and a sense of his injustice mingled with her own self accusations.

"A few months ago," thought she, "I could have thrown myself into his arms, and confessed the motive of the concealment that pains him, without a single mental reservation. But now confidence is at an end; for I have not fortitude to bear up against the clouded aspect and evident unhappiness that any recurrence to that fearful event in my life produces in him. The consciousness of my own errors which oppresses me, and betrays itself by external marks, instead of meeting sympathy from him, who ought to understand me, excites only anger or displeasure. I ought to have left him when my imprudence had broken down the barriers of confidence; for now, disguise it how I may, we are no longer happy, and our happiness no longer depends on each other."

When Lord Delmore found that his visits would no longer be received by Lady Oriel, rage and mortification took possession of his mind. Not knowing the discovery she had made of the scandal which his attentions had excited, he attributed her door being shut to him to caprice, or to the representations of some busy, meddling friend. Lord Oriel, from what he had already observed of him, he was certain, would not have prohibited them; therefore, the blame must rest wholly with Lady Oriel, and this manifestation of her perfect indifference towards him, was most mortifying to his *amour-propre*.

With all this vanity, Lord Delmore never believed that he had excited any warmer sentiment than friendship in the heart of Lady Oriel, and all hope of this ripening into a warmer feeling had long been abandoned. But vanity urged the desire of making the world think otherwise; and in proportion as he was convinced of her purity, he became anxious to convey to the world an impression to the contrary—an impression so easily conveyed in the circles in which he lived, where idleness and the love of scandal render every new tale certain of a favorable reception. Positive dislike had taken place of the admiration he had felt for Lady Oriel, and he inwardly resolved that she should suffer for thus casting him off, without a word or a line of explanation, after the footing of established friendship on which he had been received by her for the last few months.

He appeared at the clubs with a sombre air—talked of going abroad, having *now* no longer any inducement to stay in England—said that Lady Oriel was the most divine woman on earth, and her lord the most jealous of husbands—adding with a smile, that it was strange, but true, that husbands never became jealous until it was too late to prevent the mischief they dreaded, and only locked the door when the treasure was stolen.

Innuendoes of this kind continually repeated to the men of his circles, with confessions which he allowed to be wrung from him by the questions of the indiscreet women, soon spread the evil reports he was so anxious to propagate. When Lady Annersly and some of her clique asked him why he no longer appeared with his friend Lady Oriel, and how he contrived to exist away from her?—a sigh,

a pensive look, and a "Don't talk to me about it!—Poor dear soul she is to be pitied, with her jealous brute of a husband! —It is really too bad, to have all one's comfort broken-up in this way!" implied all that he wished them to believe, while it also gave them to understand, that he was a most attached as well as attachable person.

When such reports had been whispered in the circles of society for a week, and commented on in the clubs for a fortnight, it is no wonder that they soon after, found their way into the newspapers, and were blazoned abroad with all the *piquant* emendations that a maliciously disposed editor could give them, until they assumed a form sufficiently palpable to impress the uninquiring with a belief that what was so publicly asserted must be true.

Had Colonel Forrester been in England at this moment, the first statement coming from the press, would have been checked by a legal proceeding against the newspaper in which it had appeared, and this would have silenced all the others. But he, unfortunately, was absent, and the morbid sensibility of Lord Oriel rendered him totally unfit for taking any of the necessary steps to stop statements that filled him with indignation and sorrow, the falsehood of which he knew, but wanted knowledge of the world to know how to refute.

How many people pass through life without having acquired, or having sought to acquire, the practical knowledge necessary to render the journey less painful! and how few are so fortunate as to be exempt from the circumstances that render such a knowledge necessary! Lord Oriel shrinking from the publicity which legal steps, as he thought, would give to the scandalous falsehoods in question, was little aware that they were the only means left him of checking their promulgation; and that the impunity with which paper after paper published the scandal was considered as positive proof of its truth. His supine and reprehensible negligence, or pride, had kept him from acting as the guardian of his wife's honor, and by his morbid feelings and want of wordly knowledge, he was now equally unfitted for being its avenger.

Lord Delmore, having excited the sympathy of the frivolous and vicious part of the society to which he belonged, and the contempt of the good and sober-minded, determined on travelling for a few months. Change of scene, he thought, would amuse him, and confirm the impression he wished to convey, that he left England because he was separated from Lady Oriel. He was as tired of the moors and mountains of Scotland as he had been before of the preserves of the best manors in Norfolk and Suffolk; he had explored the Lakes, and found them, as a certain tragic dame was reported to have expressed herself with regard to the "vasty deep" "vastly wide, and vastly profound." Wales was familiar to him, and, like all familiar things, no longer desirable; and Ireland with its White-feet and Black-feet its Shannavests and Caravats, Captain Rock and Agitators, held forth no temptation. To Paris, therefore, he determined to go in the first instance, and, if that failed to amuse him, to proceed to Italy.

By one of those extraordinary chances that so often arise in this world of chances the first person he met on entering the steam-packet was Mademoiselle La Tour, the *ci-devant femme de chambre* of Lady Oriel. A few questions, and well-timed compliments elicited from her, all that she knew, all that she suspected, and all that she thought probable about Miladi. "Milord was one shocking *bete*, Miladi *un peu folle, tout a fait exagérée, et tous les deux, romanesques et s'aimant comme les p geons ou les tourtelles.* If my Miladi have *le bon sens*, every thing so easy, because Miladi do what she like with Milord; *mais non, tout au contraire.* When she told Miladi all what *le valet de pied de* Milord Delmore had said, Miladi dropped in one faint; Milord runs in, and begin veeping like von *enfant;* and *malgré* she did try to make Miladi take *de la fleur d'orange pour ses nerfs*, or *un peu de tilleul.* Milord did tell her to go away, and did stay alone with Miladi, with de door locked; and when she came again, they have both so red eyes as if they cry *beaucoup.* Yet they were not very angry; for they did look very loving, and Milord kiss Miladi's hand very much. And next day Miladi did pay her, and give her *un joli cadeau*, and say she not want her no more; and so she left her, and was now going to set up *une botique dans la Gallerie de L'Orme*: and she hope Milord Delmore be one good friend to her, and she be one good friend to Milord, for she counsel Milord not to keep his *valet de pied, Monsieur Henri*, because he is one *bavard tres dangereux, pour un Monsieur qui a du success comme Milord.*"

The whole secrets of Oriel House were now explained to Lord Delmore, and he saw plainly that the plans he had fol-

lowed to produce a misunderstanding between the husband and wife, had only united them afresh, and more tenderly than ever. He felt convinced that all his arts would be unavailing to establish himself again *sur un pied d'intimité* with Lady Oriel, and rejoiced that he had left England, as his absence, much more than his presence, would confirm people in the belief that he wished them to entertain.

A liberal *cadeau* from his lordship's purse found its way to the reticule of Mademoiselle, who, while accepting it, remarked that "It was not one wonder Milord was so *aimée par toutes les dames*, for Milord was *le plus joli garçon de Londres, et le plus spirituel;*" though, when he left her, she could not restst adding, "*et bete comme tous ses compatriotes:* he give me *un cadeau* when I cannot do him one service, and he not give me when I could. *Aussi*, he not tell me I have de pretty eye and *une jolie tournure*; which prove he is one *bete*.

Among the English at Paris, Lord Delmore acted the sentimental and serious, but consoled himself for this restraint by abandoning his naturally gay spirits to uncontrolled indulgence in the French circles into which he was admitted. Madame la Viscomtesse de Beauregarde, the most *spirituelle* of the Parisian *élégantes*, declared him to be *tres-bien pour un Anglais;* and her manner towards him, even more than her words, marked that, *meme pour un Francais*, he would not have been considered otherwise than *tres-aimable*.

He passed his time so agreeably at Paris that he thought not of crossing the Alps, and was only disturbed from the pleasing routine of amusements into which he had fallen, by letters from England, announcing that his pecuniary affairs were so embarrassed that the raising supplies became every day more difficult; and urging the necessity of his immediate return, for the purpose of adopting some plan of relief. He had long had a vague idea that he was ruined, but he had always chased the disagreeable reflection from his mind every time it had intruded itself. During a London season, who has time or inclination to think about his affairs? and so many shooting-parties are made up for the autumn, followed by the hunting season at Melton, that one never has a moment to give to disagreeable subjects; so, from year to year, Lord Delmore, like many of his contemporaries, had gone on, putting off the evil day of examination, until a stoppage of the means of prolonging his pleasurable pursuits, forced on his mind the painful conviction, that examination was not only indispensable, but probably unavailing.

"Well," thought he, "if I am ruined, I must only sacrifice my inclinations, and marry. This is a bore, to be sure, but there is no avoiding it, and," examining himself in the glass, "I flatter myself I shall have no great difficulty in making myself acceptable."

He arrived in London only a few days before the *fête* at Vernon House, and that was the first occasion of his appearing in public since his return from Paris.

On seeing Lady Oriel, his first impulse was to approach her; but, observing the circle around her, even he, with all his courage and nonchalance dared not risk the cold reception he had a presentiment he should receive from her, a reception which would at once serve as a refutation to all the evil reports circulated about them. He hovered near her, hoping to find her alone for a moment, but, when he caught her glance, the expression of it convinced him he had better avoid any attempt at addressing her, and he saw her leave the room with sentiments much nearer akin to hate than to love.

The good footing on which she seemed established in society was painful to him from two motives; the first, that it seemed as if the evil reports relative to him were no longer believed, which was most mortifying to his vanity; and the second, because he wished her to be punished for breaking off so uncivilly with him, a crime for which he never could forgive her.

"Your virtuous women are such fools," thought he; "now Lady Annersly, or Lady Flora Disbrow, or any of the women of that clique, would never have dared to cast me off, *sans menagement*, for fear of provoking me to say something against them. But this lady, who has allowed me to exhibit myself as the humblest, though certainly not as the most unhappy of her adorers, at every ball, *soiree*, and *fête*, of last season, until we were considered as inseparable as married lovers in the first week of the honey-moon, now quietly cuts me, without so much as a word, look, or smile, totally regardless of my vengeance."

On leaving the salon, he met Lord Tadcaster, who offered to drop him at Crockford's, and during their drive, they talked over the *fête*. Both agreed that old Vernon was a bore, and his daughters a little too demonstrative in their desire to wear coronets.

"They will have fifty thousand each, I understand," said Lord Tadcaster, "and as much more at the father's death; a good fortune as times go; and if I wanted money, I should not mind marrying the elder; but that not being the case, I will leave her to barter her plum for a strawberry-leaf coronet, the object on earth she most longs for. I have no desire to give myself a *beau-pere* in old Vernon, or a *beau frere* in my friend and schoolfellow Frank, who, I think, is the most disagreeable of the family, perhaps because I know him the best."

The fifty thousand pounds in possession, and a similar sum in reversion, sounded most agreeably in the ears of Lord Delmore. To the young ladies he had never paid any attention, and hardly knew them asunder. But *n'importe*, he should take the first opportuuity of acting *l'aimable* to which of them he found the least disagreeable; and he doubted not his success, provided he could conceal the ruinous state of his finances, the dilapidations in which became every day more apparent, and rendered some speedy relief more indispensable.

Animated by the cheering prospect of Miss Vernon's thousands, of which already he anticipated the possession, and excited by champagne, he sat down to hazard, and after three hours' play, found himself minus as many thousands. With an aching head and soured temper, he left the splendid salons of Crockford's, where the gilding lavished around seems to mock the dupes whose gold has paid for it.

## CHAPTER LVI.

"She is peevish, sullen, froward,
Proud, disobedient, stubborn, lacking duty;
Neither regarding that she is my child,
Nor fearing me as if I were her father."

The *fête* given by Mr. Vernon passed off, like the generality of such amusements, unsatisfactorily to the host and the guests; a thousand faults were found with the arrangements of it, and chiefly by those who had never given, nor were likely to give a *fête* in their lives: the ices were pronounced to be too cold, the rooms too much lighted; and it was discovered that a profusion reigned around, which, as the guests repeated to each other, clearly proved that the giver was a *parvenu*, a *nouveau riche*, in short, all but a person *comme il faut*, though decidedly a person *comme il en faut*, as the world now stood, when money is the passport to society.

Mr. Vernon had discrimination enough to see that his guests were more disposed to sneer than smile, or, if they did smile, it was in *such a sort*, as left little doubt that satire more than pleasure, produced the risible movement; and he was as angry and disappointed, at what he termed their ingratitude, as if their amusement had been his sole motive in giving the *fête*, and that an ostentatious desire of astonishing them, and forcing their admiration and envy, had not been his principal inducement. People seemed to render him responsible even for the badness of the weather, and various comments were made on the absurdity of choosing such a night for a *fete*, as if his invitations had only gone forth that day. Host and guests stood on equal grounds with regard to their feelings towards each other, and both seemed perfectly to understand their mutual estimate.

The Miss Vernons were the most disappointed of all the circle, for neither the Marquis of Tadcaster nor Lord Durnford had proposed; though all available arts had been tried to draw them to this desired and desirable point. The ladies felt that, notwithstanding their address, it was but too evident that the said lords saw the pains taken to entrap them, and this conviction served to render the would-be entrappers still more mortified at their want of success. To have condescended to use such arts and give such encouragement, humiliated them in their own estimation only because they had not attained their object. Had they succeeded, they would have thought little of the means; as it was, they felt as offended and angry at their projects being defeated, as if the lords in question had been the wooers, instead of, as was really the case, being the wooed.

The sisters retired te their chambers, discontented with the world and with themselves, and well disposed to vent a part of their ill-humor on each other. Before separating, Louisa Vernon inquired, "Well, has Lord Tadcaster proposed?"

"No," replied her sister, "and if he had ——"

"You would have jumped at him," interrupted Louisa; "though I know you were now on the point of telling me you would have refused him."

A look of suppressed rage, and a sneer, repaid this remark, as Miss Vernon spite-

fully replied, "I do not ask you if Lord Durnford has proposed, as your good temper explains the state of that affair; so *bon soir, ma chere sœur!*" and, humming an air to conceal her mortification, she quitted her sister.

The family party met next morning at a late breakfast, mutually disposed to find fault with each other, and equally discontented with the *fête*. Mr. Vernon, as was usual with him on such occasions, and the occasions were not unfrequent, expressed his dissatisfaction with Mrs. Vernon's too great civility to the guests, against the greater part of whom he was very acrimonious in his remarks, and then stated his displeasure at the too pointed attention paid by his daughters to the Lords Tadcaster and Durnford.

The young ladies, little accustomed to be rebuked, pouted and looked sulky, and took so little pains to conceal their discontent, that the angry spirit of their father was kindled afresh, and he demanded with a fiery glance, if, after all their advances, the young men had proposed? "No," he added, replying to his own question, "they have not, and I could have sworn they would not: and so, after being bored last winter with them in the country, shooting all my pheasants, and playing off their fine airs, it has all come to nothing! Well, young ladies, do not frown: I must allow that this disappointment does not arise from *want* of encouragement on your parts."

## CHAPTER LVII.

Love wedlock framed in days of o'd,
  And made the bonds of wreathed flowers,
But now the chains are forged of gold,
  And Hymen bows to Pluto's powers.

Lawyers now take poor Cupid's place,
  And goose-quills ply 'stead of his pinions,
While scarce a sign of love we trace
  In marriage erst his own dominions.

But how could Law and Love agree?
  There's nought in common sure between 'em;
Law thinks of quarrels that must be,
  And Love is much too fond to believe 'em.

Colonel Forrester found his sister in tears, and when she told him the cause, he represented to her the absolute necessity of her using the most perfect frankness with Lord Oriel, and conquering all fear of offending or wounding him by intelligence, that, coming through others, would be doubly mortifying.

"I enter into your feelings, my dearest sister," said he, "and admit that it demands courage to touch on subjects that one knows will give pain; but be assured, that the appearance of concealment is much more likely to wound than the mention of a name which he must often hear; and you, by magnifying your own past imprudence, betray a consciousness of it, that will lead the malicious part of the world to draw false conclusions. You have no guilt to accuse yourself of, and therefore ought to be able to meet Lord Delmore with the calm indifference of a common-place acquaintance. Any deviation from this conduct will only tend to revive scandal, and confirm evil reports: therefore, when you encounter Lord Delmore again, bow to him as to any other casual acquaintance. For the few days we shall be in town, it is necessary for you to appear as much in the world as possible, lest Lord Oriel should fancy that you are staying at home to avoid Delmore, or lest others may draw the same conclusion. I repeat to you, Louisa, that having done nothing to forfeit your own self-respect, you are to blame for the timidity you betray, and that, with a husband so extremely susceptible as yours is, you must conquer it, or else pass your life a martyr to its effects."

When Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester were next day entering Kensington Gardens for their promenade, they met Lady Mary Tremayne, with the Miss Vernons, escorted by Lord Delmore. They stopped to speak for a few minutes, and Lady Oriel addressed the customary salutation to the latter with cold politeness, which he replied to in the same tone.

The advice of her brother had such a good effect on her, that she felt she had on this trying occasion, conducted herself without betraying the least emotion, and she was rejoiced by this consciousness.

On riding through the Park, Lord Delmore had seen the carriage of the Vernons at the gate at Kensington Gardens, and having had a levee of duns that morning, with sundry hints from his solicitor and agent, of the impossibility of pacifying them much longer, the necessity of seeking Plutus through the road of Hymen was more strongly than ever impressed on his mind; and he resolved to lose no time, in cultivating his acquaintance with the Miss Vernons. Knowing Lady Mary Tremayne, their *chaperon*, he joined the party, and finding Miss Vernon the most disposed to smile on him, from the recent retreat of

Lord Tadcaster—Miss Louisa still entertaining hopes of Lord Durnford, which induced her to be more reserved to Lord Delmore—he acted the agreeable so successfully, that the Marquis was forgotten when they met Lady Oriel.

On leaving her, Lady Mary Tremayne, with the malice peculiar to her clique, laughingly observed to Lord Delmore, that if this was the first meeting he had met with his old friend, Lady Oriel, since his return she thought it had passed off very coldly. "Not a blush, a sigh, or even the appearance of trepidation," added she. "I should have expected, at least, a fainting-fit, and had my salts ready in my reticule; but it seems Lady Oriel is superior to this *weakness*, though she has been accused of others."

"Oh! Lord Delmore must have met Lady Oriel *chez nous*," said Miss Vernon.

At this moment they were passing through the gate, when Lord Delmore, with an expressive look at Miss Vernon, replied, that he had not seen Lady Oriel at the fête, because he had eyes for only *one* lady there, and who could look at any other woman when Miss Vernon was present?

The young lady was as much gratified as surprised at the compliment, and congratulated herself on having already so well supplied the place of Lord Tadcaster; who, notwithstanding all the encouragement given to him, had never said any thing half so warm to her.

"Their hearts are different," thought she, little imagining that the difference was not in their hearts, but in their purses, and that if Lord Delmore's was only half as well filled as that of the Marquis, he would have been even more chary of his compliments.

They parted mutually gratified. Having ascertained that they would be at the Opera, Lord Delmore pressed the hand of his belle on assisting her to her carriage, and with a tender look rode away.

When the ladies began discussing his pretensions—a common habit with ladies as well as gentlemen when any one leaves their circle—Lady Mary Tremayne observed, that certainly Lord Delmore was a very delightful person, handsome, clever, and agreeable. "I never see him," said she, "without being reminded of the compliment paid by Madame du Deffand to La Princesse de Talmont's appearance, when she said she had "*l'air distinguée sans etre singuliere*,"—the most rare thing in the world.

Lady Mary Tremayne's opinion had great weight with the Vernons, merely because they knew she was very much *a la mode;* and consequently her praise raised Lord Delmore not a little in their estimation. Still there was enough of the family love of riches in the young ladies, to induce them to inquire if he had a large fortune, and sufficient *amour propre* for her order *de noblesse* in Lady Mary, to engage her to answer, "Certainly," though she was totally ignorant on the subject; and she added:—"not only has he a large fortune, but in case his uncle dies without marrying, which is very likely, he is heir to a dukedom."

This last piece of intelligence quite achieved the conquest of Miss Vernon's head—for her heart was out of the question in her case—the only proof of her possessing that necessary organ in the economy of the human frame, being a certain palpitation at the left side after dancing.

Discomfited as she had been by the retreat of Lord Tadcaster, without even leaving her the prospect of a proposal from him at any future time, nothing could be more opportune as a slave to her wounded vanity, than this new and brilliant conquest. Having left Lady Mary Tremayne at home, she could hardly, during her drive to Carlton Gardens, resist showing her triumph to her sister, sundry hints of which were given, and as carefully refused to be accepted by Miss Louisa, who had too much vanity and pretension of her own, to bear patiently with the display of her sister's. Nay, the insinuations of her conquest, so broadly given by Miss Vernon, almost determined her *sœur cadet* to enter the lists with her, to dispute Lord Delmore's preference, and influenced her to take even more than usual pains in her *toilette* of the evening, and to affect *un air empressé* towards Lord Delmore, which she hoped might distract his attentions from her sister.

Mrs. Vernon had accompanied her daughters to the Opera, and was astonished to observe the vivacity with which they tried to captivate the new beau. He, with his usual tact, divided his attentions so equally, as to alarm Miss Vernon, and give hopes to Miss Louisa, rendering both more anxious to secure him; and he was so respectful to Mrs. Vernon, that he interested even her in his favor.

Lord Durnford's entrance to the box changed the scene, by renewing Miss Louisa's hopes; and she now devoted her

undivided attention to him, leaving her sister free to occupy all that of Lord Delmore; who, anxious to lose no time, plied her with compliments too plain to be mistaken, and too well received, to leave any doubt of the final success of the needy cajoler.

Miss Louisa, finding Lord Durnford's attention by no means keep pace with her wishes, became indignant at observing the familiarity that seemed to have been established between Miss Vernon and Lord Delmore since she had commenced her conversation with Lord Durnford. To interrupt it, she pointedly asked the latter, if that was not his friend Lord Tadcaster in the box at the opposite side? and being answered in the affirmative, she spitefully observed, that he had been for the last two hours so occupied with the lady next him, that she had not been able to see who the lady was, his head being continually interposed between them.

Miss Vernon felt all the malice of the remark, and well knew the feeling that dictated it; but it only served to make her more anxious to secure her present conquest, to accomplish which she redoubled her complaisance to him.

On passing through the round room, leaning on the arm of Lord Delmore, she was most disagreeably surprised by finding Lord Tadcaster giving his arm to her cousin Mary Vernon, to whom he appeared to be paying marked attention; while Mrs. Henry Vernon, leaning on her nephew, stood by her daughter, exulting in the admiration her beauty excited, and the evident conquest which that beauty had achieved; for Lord Tadcaster's assiduity was too undisguised to be mistaken.

How did Miss Vernon now rejoice, that Lord Delmore's attendance saved her from the mortifying position of being *délaissée!* and he who was *au fait* of the encouragement given to Lord Tadcaster, determined to take advantage of the pique his desertion must excite in the breast of the young lady, who, he was certain, would be now most anxious to prove that her affections had never been engaged to Lord Tadcaster, by openly displaying a preference for himself.

Occupied as Lord Delmore was in securing the prize he sought, he was forcibly struck by the beauty of Mary Vernon, and wondered not that Lord Tadcaster had found it so irresistible. "When do you start for Scotlard?" asked Delmore.

"I know not," replied the other; "perhaps not at all." And then turning to Mary Vernon, he resumed his conversation with her, with an air of interest that betrayed how much she influenced the sudden change in his plans.

Louisa Vernon cast sundry malicious glances at her sister, as if she wished to say, "You see you have been months trying to retain him, and Mary only knows him one day, and the shooting-party is abandoned."

Nothing of all this sisterly intention was lost on Miss Vernon; for those who are the most malicious, are the most sensible of the malice of others. Her conquest of Delmore alone enabled her to meet it "with decent dignity." How could she be grateful enough to him for saving her from a position so embarrassing to her vanity? But one way suggested itself and she readily adopted it—that of leaving no means untried to convince him of the pleasure his attentions conferred. Ere he handed her to the carriage, he had made all but a positive declaration, and she had done all but accept him.

The next day the Miss Vernons found themselves at Kensington Gardens, chaperoned by Mrs. Murray, a lady whose sole recommendation was, that she passed for being fashionable; a distinction due to a large fortune, and a fondness for rank, which induced her to sacrifice all her time, and much of her wealth, to assemble round her all who could boast it, provided they were of the *élite*. She condescended to *chaperon* the Vernons occasionally, because they were considered "catches" by the younger sons of many of the Lady Mammas of her acquaintance, and it gave her an importance with them; and the young ladies preferred her as a *chaperon* to many others, because she knew every body, and was past the age of pretending to attention for herself.

Lord Delmore met them *accidentally*, though Miss Louisa's spiteful glance at her sister seemed to insinuate that the meeting was not one of chance; and the pertinacity with which she engrossed the *conversation* of his lordship, betrayed her determination to interrupt the confidential *entretien* she supposed her sister wished to hold with him.

Next to forwarding her own personal interest, was the pleasure Miss Louisa felt in defeating that of her sister; and on this point, if on no other, a perfect sympathy existed between them. Had Lord Durnford, or any other fashionable beau been present, with whom Miss Louisa could have commenced a flirtation, she would

have permitted Miss Vernon to engross the attentions of Lord Delmore without interruption; but to be compelled to fall back on Mrs. Murray, and leave her sister mistress of the field, was out of the question; so she maintained an uninterrupted fire of words, smiles, and sallies, that scarcely allowed time for her mortified and angry sister's edging in a word, and made Lord Delmore ready to exclaim,

"How happy could I be with either;"

nay, almost led him to fear, that both ladies had made up their minds to share his coronet; an intention which he foresaw would be very embarrassing to him.

Miss Vernon pouted and sulked, because she wished her admirer to give some decided proof that *she* was the object of his attention; and this he was too well bred to do in the present state of affairs, knowing that such a step would make an active enemy of Miss Louisa.

The party sauntered along the umbrageous walk, unmindful of the beautiful verdure, and all that Nature offered to charm them, occupied with feelings little in harmony with the calm scene around, when, arriving at the end of the walk, they encountered Mrs. and Miss Burrell, escorted by Lord Durnford. The Miss Vernons stopped to speak to their aunt and cousin.

Now was the turn of the elder sister to cast spiteful glances at Miss Louisa, as if to show her, that she observed something more than common in the attentions Lord Durnford was paying Emily Burrell; and when, after exchanging a few commonplace remarks, the parties separated, Miss Vernon observed aloud, "that Lord Durnford seemed to be very much in love with her cousin," though she could have seen nothing to justify the opinion in the few minutes they had been together, and it was said solely from the wish of wounding her sister.

We may be told this is not nature, and that such characters as the Miss Vernons do not exist: they are fortunate who have not met such; but we believe few are so lucky; for every day's experience proves that society offers many examples where the ties of kindred, instead of being considered as bonds of union, are looked on as fetters that bind discordant souls together, and give a privilege to each for venting the acrimonious observations and ill-natured hints which good breeding banishes from mere acquaintances.

Politeness, that cementer of friendship and soother of enmities, is nowhere so much required, and so frequently outraged, as in family circles; *l' aimable franchise* which near relationship is considered to warrant, serves as an excuse for all the disagreeable truths that *enemies* discover, but that only friends can tell the possessor. Friends can see defects with the naked eye, however weak that organ may be; but too frequently require magnifying glasses to discover good qualities.

How strange is it that people should not feel, what every hour's experience must tend to prove—the necessity of practising politeness. With strangers and acquaintances, all admit the necessity of observing it; but in nearer, and what ought to be dearer connections, it is continually abandoned, and the consequence is, that all the illusions of life are destroyed, and with them much of the happiness; for we are unfitted to receive or bestow it, if we have been told of faults or defects, mental or personal, the discovery of which destroys our self-confidence, and sours us towards the discoverer.

By politeness we would not be understood to mean the flattering insincerity that too often passes current for it, and than which nothing can be more different. Forbearance towards errors and defects, and a just appreciation of good qualities, joined to mildness and good breeding, is what we would inculcate, as the surest means of preserving domestic harmony, and of promoting domestic affection, Half the pains bestowed to conciliate acquaintances, might turn *relations* into *friends;* a metamorphosis more rare and difficult to be accomplished than most people imagine.

It was Cosmo de' Medici who observed, that "we are commanded to forgive our enemies, but not our friends," implying that the injuries or wrongs inflicted on us by the latter are unpardonable. One thing is quite certain, namely, that we have more frequently occasion to forgive those who are reputed to be our friends, than our enemies, and the injuries they commit are more pernicious and lasting in their effects.

At dinner at Mr. Vernon's, Miss Louisa observed, that Lord Tadcaster seemed wholly occupied with her cousin Mary the night before, a piece of intelligence that seemed to mortify her father even still more than it had done her sister. "Where could they have made his acquaintance?" demanded the *parvenu*, as if he was the only *nouveau riche* who received lords, But when his son observed that Lord Tad-

caster had asked him the night of the fete, if Mrs. Henry Vernon and her daughter were in the room, and showed evident symptoms of disappointment at discovering that they were not, Louisa said, with a bitter smile, "Oh! then I suppose his *tendresse* for Mary is of some date." Mr. Vernon cast a look of rage at her, and of contempt at Miss Vernon for having been duped into the belief that she was the object of Lord Tadcaster's attentions.

Mrs. Vernon really pitied the mortification of her daughter, and felt grieved at the unkindness of Louisa, who thus increased it; but Miss Vernon, with an air of affected nonchalance, changed the subject, by telling her mother that they had met Mrs. Burrell and Emily, escorted by Lord Durnford, at Kensington-Gardens, and that he seemed much smitten with Emily.

This completed the ill-humor of Mr. Vernon, who observed, that he should not at all wonder if both the lords proposed to their cousins, though he was quite sure no pains would be taken to induce them to do so, for neither Mr. Henry Vernon nor Mr. Burrell filled their houses in the winter with stupid young men, as some others were foolish enough to do, who after all had their daughters left on their hands, season after season; a reproach that deeply wounded the vanity of the young ladies, and showed the want of feeling of the father.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

"Love is a passion whose effects are various;
It ever brings some change upon the soul,
Some virtue, or some vice, till then unknown,
Degrades the hero, and makes cowards valiant.

"As love can exquisitely bless,
Love only feels the marvellous of pain;
Opens new veins of torture in the soul,
And wakes the nerve where agonies are born."

The morning of the departure of the Desmond party arrived, and Lord and Lady Oriel joined it with alacrity; he to be away from the possibility of meeting Lord Delmore, who was hateful to him, and she to be removed from the busy world, which had become irksome to her. Coldness and restraint had subsisted between them since the luckless night of the fete at Vernon House, but it was not the coldness or restraint of sated affection or indifference; it was the forced calm of a too warm interest that feared to trust itself to words.

The contrarieties that had arisen to cloud the horizon of Lord Oriel's wedded life, had awakened the slumbering energies of his love, and the doubts and fears that in general precede marriage, had in this instance followed it; for never had either the husband or wife been so anxiously alive to their mutual feelings as at present. They were not happy, but they were not indifferent, and we all know it is easier to still the waves of passion, than to break the dead sea of indifference, which, like the lake Asphaltes, destroys the energies of all that approach it, until, like the birds who are said to drop lifeless on its dull surface, the heart sinks to rise no more.

No sooner had the party felt themselves free from the confined air of London, and the shackles which its conventional modes impose, than their spirits appeared relieved as if from a load that oppressed them, and cheerfulness took place of the former restraint of Lord and Lady Oriel. Neither had ever travelled the route they were now pursuing; the objects that presented themselves were fresh, and acted as a stimulus to their feelings, diverting them from the beaten track that had lately and painfully occupied them.

Arrived in Wales, the rural inns, rustic attendants, picturesque points of view, and above all, the Welsh harpers, offered such new and piquant attractions, that they expressed themselves charmed with their journey, and when they reached Holyhead, where they found the excellent and amiable Captain Skinner on hospitable thoughts intent, waiting to conduct them to his comfortable residence, where a good dinner awaited them, they allowed that Irish hospitality extends even to this side of the water, and duly appreciated the reception which the veneration and affection entertained for the Desmonds had insured for them.

They embarked the next day, under the auspices of the good and agreeable Captain Skinner, and favored by propitious gales, made a quick and pleasant passage. The Hill of Howth, lifting its blue head to the skies, and standing forth as a guardian to the island it bounds; the Wicklow mountains fading into distance, and the beautiful bay, with all the picturesque scenery that encircles three of its sides, struck them with wonder and delight, and they could not resist expressing their surprise that a scene so calculated to excite admiration was so little talked of or written about that it burst on them unawares.

No sooner were they landed on terra-firma than they were surrounded by groups

of beggars, all beseeching their charity, love, and pity in the various tone of Eastern, Western, Southern, and Northern brogues, as rich and mellifluous in sound as flowery in sense. The Creator, Heaven, the Saints, and Angels, were all called in as witnesses to the necessities and merits of the petitioners. One declared that food had not passed his lips for days, though the steams that issued from them bore witness that liquids of the strongest quality had not been excluded, and another averred that she was dying, in language that proved that it was not from inanition. An old woman avowed that the last breath of life was leaving her, as a blue vapory smoke emitted from her lips—proceeding from a short pipe stuck in the corner of her mouth, and sending forth nearly as much smoke as a small steam-engine, gave signal that the mechanical powers which impelled it were in full vigor: while a lame man, who hopped with extraordinary velocity on his crutch, catching the halfpence that were thrown among them, called the saints to witness that he was a poor cripple who could not move hand or foot, and was obliged to pay a creathur to put the snuff into his nose.

"Sure if you are;" said a blind man, who was near him, "you can find the way to your mouth purty well, without paying any one, except the shebean shop."

"Arrah what's that to you, Cupid?" replied the cripple. "I wish I had half as much mountain dew in my stomach as you have, although I'd then be almost as blind."

While breakfast was being prepared at Howth, the gentlemen strolled through the village and seeing a group standing round a piece of water, they stopped to examine what was going on. A man was endeavoring to get his dog to jump into the water after a stick; but all his efforts were vain, and each failure produced peals of laughter from the bystanders.

"Does your dog often take to the wather?" asked one of them with a sly look.

"Yes, sure, when there's plenty of oaten or barley-meal on it," replied the other; and the group acknowledged the pleasantry with shouts of laughter.

The blind beggar now joined the party, and a wag, who seemed a privileged person, asked him—"Well, Cupid, if you had a glass of whiskey given you, what religion would you make it?"

"Faith, I'd make it a Protestant!" replied he; "for I'd take the beads off it any way."

There was something so new to Lord Oriel in seeing misery sporting jests, that he could not resist giving a shilling to Cupid, who prayed that his Honor and Grace might, like him, never be able to discover that a rosy cheek can fade and a sparkling eye grow dim. "And sure, your Honor," added the mendicant, "that's more than my namesake Cupid can say; for by all accounts, though he's blind, he soon finds out a change in beauty, and does not much like other people's mothers though he's so fond of his own."

Mr. Desmond was amused with Lord Oriel's astonishment at the *naiveté* of his countrymen, and led the way to the stand of jingles and jaunting-cars at the entrance to the town, in order that he might see some specimens of the rare genius to which the drivers of these vehicles belong. They were sauntering about with stockings half wrinkled over their legs, great-coats hanging over their shoulders, and each with a short pipe in the corner of his mouth, whose column of smoke seemed to direct its course towards the eye that overlooked it.

A fat Englishman, whose rotundity of person spoke more for his good living than for his abstemiousness, was endeavoring to make a bargain with one of the drivers; and having declared that he would not pay more than eighteen-pence to be conveyed to Dublin, the driver, after examining him from head to foot, pulled off his great-coat and threw it over the head of his horse, and then advancing offered to assist his passenger to mount the jaunting-car.

"Why, what do you mean by covering your horse's head in that there way?" asked the Englishman.

"Main?" said the driver; "faith I main that he should not see you; for if oncet he set his two good-looking eyes on that bread basket of yours he'd not stir a step to save my life, he's so 'cute,"

They entered the meat-market, and Lord Oriel was gratyfied at observtng the cleanliness that reigned around, which he had not been prepared to expect. A fat elderly man was looking at the meat in one of the stalls, and the butcher addressed him, hoping that he would become a customer. The man declined, saying he was merely a traveller, who had stopped to look around him.

"Oh! sure if that's the case," answered the butcher, "will you just do me the favor to let me call the buyers and tell 'em you deal with me? for, as you are in such a condition it will be the making of me."

The fat man passed rapidly on, apparently ill-satisfied with the compliment paid to his obesity; and Lord Oriel observed to Mr. Desmond, that even while transacting their business, it seemed that the Irish could not resist a joke.

"It is very true," replied the latter; "and so strong is this tendency to the ridiculous in their natures, that it mingles even with what is most grave, and renders it doubtful when they are in earnest. They are a fine race, full of generous sentiments, but volatile, unsteady, and inflammable, partaking much of the qualities of the Lazzaroni of Naples, but more fiery; a distinction which may originate in the difference of their favorite beverages, the lemonade and aqua fresca of the Neapolitan being more cooling than the whisky of the Irish."

When they returned to the inn they found a crowd of beggars still around the door; who having discovered that an English Lord was among the arrivals, hoped his Lordship's Honor and Glory would tell the English when he went back, "that they (the Irish) were as quiet as saints, and not to mind the Agitator, who was preventing all the grandees from coming over to 'em—sure more shame to him and the likes of him, who wanted to keep the country all to himself and his party."

## CHAPTER LIX.

"For this the foolish, over-careful fathers
Have broke their sleep with thoughts, their brains with care,
Their bones with industry."

"How quickly nature
Falls to revolt when gold becomes his object."

Lord Delmore pursued Miss Vernon as her shadow until he had succeeded in exciting an interest in her mind, we will not say heart, that assured him of his influence over her destiny. To propose for her by the regular proceeding of demanding the consent of papa, would, he was well aware, be a useless measure, as it would lead to sundry awkward questions relative to rent-rolls, settlements, &c. which he knew must terminate in an exposé, as little likely to satisfy the paternal feelings of a cautious father as of clamorous creditors; he therefore considered it wiser to engage the affections, or rather let us call them, the *affectations*, of the young lady, and by an elopement assure himself of her hand, and trust to paternal and maternal affection for pardon.

Miss Vernon had experienced the withering influence of five seasons; a lustre that unfortunately adds no lustre to female charms, though it marvellously tends to quicken and enlighten the preception of spinsters, and, in decreasing their attractions, increases their experience. She, therefore, determined to accept what she considered to be the disinterested offer of Lord Delmore, who declared that he loved her too passionately to contemplate "the law's delay," and that he dared not on this account formally demand her hand of her father.

What a triumph to a heartless coquette of twenty-two was this avowal! an avowal she had been almost tempted to believe would never be made, from the ill-natured insinuations of her sister, who had proved herself to be Lord Delmore's best friend, by appearing to doubt the sincerity of his sentiments for Miss Vernon. How delightful to demonstrate to the world, and above all to her sister, that she was sought for herself alone! There was no resisting in temptation; more especially when the lover insinuated that her sister had tried to be her rival: and she consented to elope with a man, who, if his statement relative to her sister had been true, was, from disclosing it, unworthy of her preference.

The persons most easily duped are the thoroughly good, who, unsuspicious of evil intentions, detect them not; or the frivolous and callous, who pique themselves too much on their worldly knowledge and wisdom, to believe that they can be overmatched. Miss Vernon was of the latter class, and fell a victim to her heartlessness. The elopement was judiciously planned, and as judiciously executed.

On returning from the last ball of the season, having previously arranged with her *femme de chambre*, she found her moveables packed up for flight. When the porter slept, she, with noiseless tread, descended from her chamber, and, aided by Mademoiselle La Ruse, conveyed the few articles she thought necessary to the hall-door, whence Lord Delmore and his *valet de chambre* assisted in removing them to the travelling carriage in waiting; which soon whirled the artificial lovers on the road to marriage, and—repentance.

The first expression of Miss Vernon was—"Well, I've triumphed over my sister! how angry she will be!" And the apparent complacency with which this supposition was dwelt on mortified the

*amour propre* of the lover, who felt as angry as if he was indeed a lover, and as if the idea of outwitting the father, and mother, sister, brother, nay, the young lady herself, had not been a principal motive in the affair.

When we are conscious of the selfishness of our own motives, we feel the least disposed to pardon, and the most disposed to resent, the selfishness of others. As Lord Delmore looked on the soulless face of his future bride, and listened to the heartless reflections she uttered, he cursed the poverty that compelled him to the step he was taking; and the indifference he had hitherto experienced towards her, was turned to loathing.

Even she was struck with the increasing coldness of his manner, and tried to awaken interest by affected agitation and timidity. But it was all too late! his vanity, the only sensitive point in his character, was wounded; and as it was now impossible for her to retract he was careless of other consequences. A runaway daughter could only present herself as a wife before her angry parents; and, therefore, he little troubled himself to conciliate the affection of one who was too completely in his power to assert her own dignity or independence.

Gretna Green, that blacksmith's shop where chains are forged that often gall for life, was at length reached by the worldly-minded pair; and, the ceremony being performed, they set out on their return to England, as little like married lovers, as if the nuptial knot had been tied some fifty years before. A repentant letter, announcing the marriage, was despatched to Mr. Vernon from the first English town on their route, and they gradually pursued their journey towards London, as *ennuyés* as two people can be who have discovered when too late that they have been duped, and who despise the selfishness and heartlessness that have mutually deceived them, without reflecting that each was equally culpable.

On their arrival at Thomas's Hotel, they expected a letter of forgiveness. and recall to the paternal mansion in Carlton Gardens; instead of this, they found a cold and austere epistle from Mr. Vernon, stating that, as his consent to their marriage had never been demanded, Lord and Lady Delmore could not feel surprised at his withholding the provision he had intended for his daughter, a provision that he had always meant should be conditional on the fortune of the husband, and on the settlement to be made on the wife. He added, that he had no objection to receive Lord and Lady Delmore as occasional guests at his house, but more than this concession they were not to expect.

When Lord Delmore perused this letter, he turned to his bride, and asked her if she had anticipated a severity so unnatural, and if she thought that firmness or obstinacy were equally as strong as the selfishness now apparent in her father.

"I felt quite sure," replied the amiable Lady Delmore, "that papa would act as he has done. Avarice and ostentation are his ruling passions; he wished myself and sister to wear coronets, but to buy them at the cheapest price. He would have parted with some thousands to accomplish this end; but as I have effected it for myself without his assistance, he is too happy to save his money; so that it is probable we shall never see a guinea of his. *Mais n'importe;* you have a sufficiently large fortune not to be *gené* by this, which had I not known, I should not, knowing as I have always done the avarice of papa, have consented to the elopement."

Her words, and the cool, unconcerned air with which they were uttered, spoke daggers to Lord Delmore. A sentiment of hatred and contempt arose in his mind towards her, which triumphed over the restraint that politeness had hitherto imposed on him.

"What will your ladyship think then," replied he, "when I tell you that I have been for a long time an embarrassed man? You may start, and look astonished," observing the half-incredulous, half-terrified air of his wife, "but it is nevertheless true; and if your father does not assist us, utter ruin must be the consequence."

"Then you did not, after all, marry me for myself," exclaimed the angry and humiliated lady: "the expectation of a fortune was the inducement? What a triumph to my sister to discover that I have wedded a ruined man!"

Here a violent passion of tears and sobs interrupted her utterance.

"You at least, Madam," said Lord Delmore, "ought not to reproach me with interested motives, as it appears quite clear you would not have eloped with me had you known the real state of my affairs. Recrimination is useless; we have committed a *betise*, and all that now remains to us is to remedy it as well as we can. You must assail your father, and try to induce him to come down handsomely, for we have no other resource."

"If you knew my father as well as I do," answered the weeping Lady Delmore, "you would be aware that all appeals to him will be unavailing. He is impracticable on money matters; and—oh! —oh!" (bursting into a fresh torrent of tears,) "I, who have been all my life accustomed to splendor, now find myself married to one who only sought me for the wealth he believed me to possess."

Disgusted with this unrestrained exhibition of her selfishness, and venting execrations on her and himself, Lord Delmore retired to his chamber, leaving his wife alone to weep mingled tears of mortified vanity and rage.

She had never loved Lord Delmore, even when she believed him rich and great; but now that she knew he was poor, she almost hated him. She looked on herself as a victim to his arts, though she had been quite as willing to be the deceiver as he was to deceive. But so it is ever: we condemn the faults by which we suffer, but rarely pass a just sentence on those we commit ourselves, or pity the consequences they entail.

Lady Delmore passed a sleepless night, the first she had ever yet known. The more she reflected on her future prospects, the more gloomy did they appear. Accustomed from her infancy to consider money as the *primum mobile* of life, it had never for a moment entered her mind, that a possibility existed of her finding herself without it. She felt that the most attractive man, with the highest rank, could never have tempted her to marry, if she knew he were poor: and yet, with this worldly wisdom, to be united to a ruined man; to have no means of indulging the extravagant tastes with which she had been brought up:—there was misery in the thought! Lady Delmore had consoled herself for the coldness of her husband on the route, by anticipating future splendor. Dreams of her house, equipages, plate, diamonds, and Opera-box, had beguiled the weary hours of the journey; and the triumph with which she would exhibit them to the envious eyes of her sister, had added poignancy to the pleasure they afforded in contemplation. But all these gay visions faded away before the fearful reality of poverty that her alarmed fancy now conjured up; and the supercilious smiles or mock pity of her sister were mingled in all the pictures her imagination formed of the future.

After much reflection she decided, that the wiser plan would be for them to conceal their embarrassments as long as they could, as Mr. Vernon would be more likely to make them some advance, the less he was aware of its absolute necessity. Pride and ostentation might induce him to present a portion to the rich Lord Delmore, that the needy son-in-law had no chance of receiving; for if there was one thing on earth that Mr. Vernon detested more and pitied less than another, it was poverty. He viewed it, not as a misfortune, but as a crime, and carefully avoided all contact with those he suspected of being stamped by it.

"No! no!" said Lady Delmore to herself, "if he discovers our ruin, we have nothing to hope from him; and my sister will aggravate our misfortunes. From my brother I must not expect sympathy: my mother is the only one in that gilded palace who will feel for me."

This was the first moment for years that an affectionate sentiment towards her mother had entered the heart of Lady Delmore. Selfish and worldly-minded herself, all her sympathies had been with her father; but now that trouble had overtaken her, and poverty menaced her with its train of evils, she turned towards the gentle and generous being she had hitherto slighted and undervalued.

Lady Delmore attired herself with care next day, and stepped into the well-appointed chariot, emblazoned with the coronet she had so long sighed for; and, as the two footmen in splendid liveries jumped up behind, and the coachman drove off from Thomas's Hotel to Carlton Gardens, she almost forgot her cares in the pleasure of exhibiting this tasteful equipage and its aristocratic decorations to her sister.

When the servants at her father's house announced the Countess of Delmore, she assumed a dignified air, as she passed through the file of powdered menials, and was shown into the library, where she found her father, brother, and sister. They received her civilly, but coldly: her father, after touching her cheek with his, addressed her as follows:—

"I do not reproach you, Lady Delmore with the indecorous manner in which you have accomplished a marriage, that, if suitable in point of fortune, could have met with no obstacle from me, to render such a clandestine step necessary. I repeat, I do not reproach you, and for two reasons: the first, that it would be now useless; and the second, that its consequences can affect only yourself, and can be nothing to me."

The new countess drew up with a hauteur which led her father to believe that Lord Delmore's finances were in a more flourishing state than he had been led to imagine, from the result of the inquiries he had instituted; and, as Mr. Vernon was one of those who believed, judging from his own feelings, that hauteur was a certain sign of wealth, this belief induced him to show a little more cordiality to his daughter, which increased in proportion to her airs of affected dignity. Her brother and sister went through the same ceremony of kissing her cheek. The former carelessly demanded where was Delmore, and she coldly replied, that Lord Delmore was gone to call on the Premier.

Having asked for her mother, Miss Vernon conducted her to the *boudoir*, and during their passage to it, made two or three spiteful observations, which convinced her sister that she had lost none of her ill-nature.

The reception from Mrs. Vernon was kind and affectionate: she embraced her daughter, who, as she felt herself pressed to the heart of her mother with a warmth so different from the reception she had experienced from the rest of the family, inwardly acknowledged, that goodness and virtue are the only props that fail not, even to the erring, when they seek them.

"I am anxious to see your husband, my dear child," said Mrs. Vernon, "that we should no longer be strangers to each other. If, as I trust will be the case, he makes you happy, I shall love him as a son."

The new-made wife sighed, as she felt how little was her chance of happiness; but she tried to look cheerful.

Determined to mortify her sister for the malicious sneers she had detected on her countenance, Lady Delmore remarked, that now she was a married woman, she would *chaperone* her when she liked; adding, that Lord Delmore's high and extensive connections would, of course, widely extend the circle of her acquaintance. With true *parvenu* bad taste, she dwelt on the different Dukes, Duchesses, Marquises, and Marchionesses, who were the near relations of her lord, and with whom she should henceforth live; while her sister sat listening, ready to burst with envy and jealousy, the effusions of which she could scarcely suppress.

When Lady Delmore arose to depart, she asked Miss Vernon if she was disposed for a drive, and the latter having consented, withdrew to prepare for it. Mrs. Vernon beckoned her daughter to her chair, and taking her hand with affection, addressed her in the following terms:

"I have learned from authority I cannot doubt, my dear child, that Lord Delmore's affairs are in a most embarrassed state. This gives me great pain, because your father is not likely to behave as generously as circumstances may demand. I have concealed this information from the family, trusting that he may be induced to give you a portion, before he knows how much it may be required; for, alas! his liberality is more likely to be displayed before than after such a knowledge. You may be well assured how much gratification it would afford me to urge your interests with him; but you know how little influence I possess. Accept this gift, which may be useful," (putting a little note case into her daughter's hand,) "and recollect, that though my means are not equal to my wishes of assisting you, I have always the power, as far as a few hundreds may be of use."

The stubborn heart of Lady Delmore was moved by the affectionate consideration and soothing manner of her mother; and when she embraced her, a tear—the first one of filial affection she had ever shed—was transferred to the cheek of her mother, who hailed it as a symptom of natural feeling that promised future good.

"Have you heard of the approaching marriages of your cousins," asked Mrs. Vernon, "to the Marquis of Tadcaster and Lord Durnford? All is arranged. Your aunt Vernon is more bustling and important than ever, and seems highly elated at the prospect of her daughter's being a Marchioness: but your cousin is the same sweet, frank, unaffected creature as ever. My sister, though with every reason to be satisfied with the prospects of her daughter, feels the approaching separation from her most deeply, and is only consoled by Lord Dunford's promise of spending a certain portion of the year with them in the country."

Miss Vernon having entered prepared for their drive, Lady Delmore took leave of her mother, and affecting an air of protection towards her sister, they entered the carriage.

Not a syllable of approbation of the elegant equipage passed the lips of Miss Vernon, which increased the spleen of her sister, who revenged herself by saying, "So mamma tells me, that Eliza Burrell is to be married immediately to Lord Durnford. It's a famous match for her; for he

is rich, good-looking, and of an ancient family. I saw from the first moment that he was desperately in love with her. Your meeting with them, Louisa, will be very awkward at first."

"Not more so than your's with Lord Tadcaster," spitefully answered Miss Vernon.

"Oh, *c'est toute un autre affaire*," said Lady Delmore; for as I am married, and married first, there can be no awkwardness at least on my side, though *he* may be suspected of being *délaissé*."

"I can assure you," said Miss Vernon, it is universally well known, that he never had the least intention of proposing to you, and it is as universally suspected, that you eloped with Lord Delmore in anticipation of Tadcaster's marriage."

Lady Delmore felt the blood rush to her cheeks, and anger rise in her breast, at this speech of her sister's, which she had drawn on herself by the wish of piquing that sister, and was as deeply offended as if the ill-natured observation was wholly unprovoked.

"Those who communicated such impertinent remarks to *a sister*," replied she, "must have had a poor opinion of her sisterly feelings."

Miss Vernon, not knowing what to reply to this severe reproof, affected to be occupied in looking at the visiting-list in her hand.

Determined to exhibit her coroneted carriage, Lady Delmore ordered her servants to drive up St. James's street, and arrived opposite the formidable battery of eyeglasses levelled from 'White's' and 'Crockford's' just as Lord Delmore was descending the steps of the former. She drew the check-string, and the coachman pulled-up nearly at the door of 'White's.' A sentiment of *bienséance* and *convenance* in the mind of her husband, disgusted him with the want of delicacy, of her thus exhibiting herself in public so recently after her marriage, the clandestine manner of which had excited such an *esclandre*; and stopping in full view of the formidable bay, or rather let us call it *beau*-window, "the cynosure of curious eyes," where pretensions and reputations are tried by the fiery ordeal of high-seasoned anecdotes, racy *bons mots*, and piquant descriptions, the agreeable results of the leisure hours of its aristocratic frequenters. He anticipated all that would be thought and said of the unblushing bride; and anger at the ridicule it would subject him to, was added to the other unloving feelings she excited within his breast.

Miss Vernon being seated at the far-off side, and Lady Delmore stooping forward, he did not observe the former until he had uttered—"What the devil, Lady Delmore, can make you exhibit yourself, like a Lady Mayoress, so publicly, and, above all, stop to place yourself under the fire of 'White's and 'Crockford's?' Remember you are still a bride."

At this moment Miss Vernon advanced her head and the tip of her finger towards Lord Delmore, who colored on perceiving that she had been a listener to his unloverlike address to his wife; and the polite inquiries he made after her health and that of Mrs. Vernon, offered a curious contrast to the unceremonious and sarcastic speech to Lady Delmore.

While she was replying to it, two vulgar-looking men approached, and, rudely pushing by Lord Delmore, requested the ladies to leave the carriage, as they had seized it under execution.

"What does all this mean?" gasped Lady Delmore to her husband, whose cheeks became nearly purpled with the mingled feelings of rage and shame.

"Leave the carriage," said he with angry impatience, irritated almost to madness by the consciousness that many eyes were fixed upon them.

During this disgraceful exhibition, Lady Delmore descended in fear and trembling, overpowered by shame and mortification, as she observed the crowd of idle gazers assembling around them; but Miss Vernon declared she would not, could not leave the carriage, as she was unprepared for walking.

Lord Delmore could have annihilated her, for the delay this caused; the crowd was every moment increasing; vulgar jokes were passing all around them, and yet she still persevered in her determination of not leaving the carriage.

"I am Miss Vernon, the daughter of Mr. Vernon—the *rich* Mr. Vernon, of Carlton Gardens; drive me to my father's door, and I will give you five pounds, and you may then do what you like with the carriage."

"If she be Miss Vernon, how comes she in this here carriage?" said one of the bystanders: "Mr. Vernon, I warrant, has more crowns in his purse than on his carriage, and would never go for to let any thing belonging to him be seized for debt."

"Oh! that carriage belongs to one of them there lords as never pays nobody, as everybody knows. I'm certain sure there's more silver on the harness than in the master's pocket."

This witty remark elicited peals of laughter from the crowd, and nearly infuriated Lord Delmore. The foot-men with their canes endeavored to keep off the mob, who were pressing on Lord and Lady Delmore, uttering a thousand low comments on her *toilette*, which being a costume of *la dernier mode de Paris*, was little calculated for any promenade but *en voiture*.

"My eyes!" cried one, "how smart she be's; I wonder what she calls them there gimcracks!"—"What nice shoes for the mud!" said another.—"And that there chap of a lord, who looks so proud and vexed; but he was not too proud to run in debt, and try to cheat his creditors, for all he's so proud and so vexed, now that they take his gingerbread coach, with all his crowns on it, from him, and make his fine lady use her legs."

"Will you, or will you not, leave the carriage, Miss Vernon?" almost screamed Lord Delmore.

"No, certainly not," replied the young lady, "it would be too shocking to walk in St. James's street, and papa would never forgive it."

Lord Delmore seized the arm of his trembling wife, and hurried her away from the spot, followed by a few of the rabble, who pursued them to the door of Thomas's Hotel. Lady Delmore, on entering her room, sank into a chair in violent hysterics, and her unfeeling husband, having rung for her maid, left her muttering "curses not loud, but deep," on himself, his wife, and her whole family.

The bailiffs having consulted together, agreed that five pounds divided between them, was not to be rejected; and having jumped up behind the carriage, dispossessing the powdered and laced footmen of their places, they drove off to Carlton Gardens, followed by the shouts and laughter of the crowd, who passed a thousand bitter jests on the footmen, who, humiliated and angry, pursued the carriage on foot.

Mr. Vernon was descending from his carriage, when the equipage, which had flattered his vanity two hours before, arrived at his door, and the motley effect of of two ill-dressed men, instead of the spruce footmen, astounded him. Though the coachman had driven quickly to escape from the mob, many of them now entered the aristocratical precincts of Carlton Gardens, shouting in triumph at having overtaken the carriage.

Her father's servants assisted Miss Vernon to alight, and the bailiffs, impressed with respect by the appearance of the house, and number of servants in the hall, the English-like look of Mr. Vernon—that indescribable look, which carries "conviction strong as proof of holy writ," of wealth—"hoped as how Miss would not forget them there five pounds she had promised them. They were very sorry that they were obliged to stop the carriage; but that same Lord Delmore was a very slippery chap, and they had been a'ter his carriage and cab a long time. For the matter of that, there were fifty executions out against his property; so Miss might see, that if they had not nabbed his coach, somebody else would; and so Miss might see as how the law must take its course."

Miss Vernon passed up the steps through the crowd, and the hall-door being closed, the bailiffs departed with the carriage, and Mr. Vernon demanded of his daughter the solution of the mystery, how she came to be alone in the carriage, and where her sister was? With as little feeling of delicacy, as of pity for that sister, the young lady explained the whole transaction, and each word produced increased anger on the part of the proud and selfish father.

"And all this happened in front of White's?" said he; "and you refused to leave the carriage, by which you prolonged the *exposé*, and directed the attention of a vulgar mob to my house, so that my name will be mixed up in this disgraceful business! Whereas, had you left the carriage, and accompanied your sister on foot, my name would never have been brought forward. You have shown as little feeling as common sense in this business, and have proved that you are totally incapable of acting for yourself without compromising your family."

So saying, the angry father left the room, and sought his wife, to give her the painful intelligence, which exceeded even her worst fears of the state of Lord Delmore's affairs.

"Here is a pretty affair, Mrs. Vernon," said he; "one of our daughters has married a ruined, beggarly lord—is turned with ignominy from his carriage, in the most public street in London; and the other is such an idiot, that instead of going with her sister, she persists in remaining in the carriage, and returns to my door, followed by a mob, and escorted by bailiffs. This all comes of your false in-

dulgence to them, which I always guessed would produce the worst consequences.

Mrs. Vernon listened to him in silence, for she was well aware how useless any observation of hers would be, and she hoped that if he exhausted his anger, on her, he would return to kinder feelings towards his unfortunate daughter, Lady Delmore. At length she ventured to insinuate the necessity of taking some step to assist to extricate Lord Delmore from his difficulties, but was stopped by the increased anger of her husband.

"What!" said he, "are you so weak and absurd as to believe that I will advance a guinea to a spendthrift, who has swindled my foolish daughter into a marriage? No! let them starve if they will; I have done with them both. Never name the subject to me again;" and so saying, he withdrew.

Mrs. Vernon sent for Louisa to inquire the particulars; and she related them without sparing a single painful circumstance, from the unfeeling address of Lord Delmore to her sister, up to the moment that he, as she said, pulled her out of the carriage, and the malignant emphasis with which she related the whole, shocked the feelings of her mother. Mrs. Vernon ordered the carriage, that she might go and comfort her daughter; and, ere she had time to ask Louisa to accompany her, that young lady excused herself, on the plea of having some music to practise—an excuse that was revolting to the affectionate heart of Mrs. Vernon.

On arriving at Thomas's Hotel, she found Lady Delmore, with pale cheeks and swollen eyes, extended on the sofa. Her tears flowed afresh when her mother embraced her, and she wept on her bosom with uncontrollable anguish, while the pitying mother used every endeavor to console her. Having succeeded in restoring her to something like calm, Mrs. Vernon inquired for Lord Delmore, and was shocked at discovering that he had left her daughter while she was in hysterics, and had not since returned to the room. This unfeeling conduct disgusted her, and she rang the bell to request he might be searched for in his room, when the waiter, with a look of astonishment, declared, that Lord Delmore had set out for Dover twenty minutes before, leaving a letter, which was now produced, for Lady Delmore, but which, hearing that her ladyship was ill, he had not delivered.

The waiter having withdrawn, Mrs. Vernon tried to compose her daughter's agitated feelings, who, breaking open the seal, read the few lines the letter contained, when it fell from her trembling hand, and, turning deadly pale, she pointed to it, saying, "Read that, mother, for you can pity me, little as I deserve it."

The heartless writer avowed, that he was about to desert for ever a wife whom he had only wedded for the sake of the portion he supposed her to have. He told her she must blame her low-born *parvenu* for the separation, as, had he given them a suitable provision, he (Lord Delmore) would not have left England. He added, that on handing her from the carriage, a note-case had dropped from her hand, of which he had possessed himself, and, discovering that it contained bank-notes to the amount of five hundred pounds, he had appropriated them to his use, being the only price he was ever likely to receive for the coronet with which he had encircled her brows. "After the exhibition of the morning," he continued, "it would be impossible for him to appear in London; and he concluded she would of course return to her father, who must console her and himself with the ancient name engrafted on the parent stock, and support her, as it was impossible for him to make her any allowance."

## CHAPTER LX.

"The gods in bounty work up storms about us,
That give mankind occasion to exert
Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice
Virtues that shun the day, and lie conceal'd
In the smooth seasons and the calms of life."

"I will bear it
With all the tender suff'rance of a friend,
As calmly as the wounded patient bears
The artist's hand that ministers his cure."

Mrs. Vernon felt her tenderness for her unfortunate daughter redoubled by the pity with which she now regarded her; and Lady Delmore, for the first time, became sensible of her past selfishness and folly, and grateful for the sympathy and affection of her mother. The unfeeling conduct and despicable meanness of her husband filled her with shame and contempt, and she avowed that she merited all that had befallen her for having eloped with him.

Mrs. Vernon, though fearful of the reception Lady Delmore might meet with from her father, still thought it absolutely necessary that, deserted as she was by her

husband, she should return to the paternal roof, and having given orders to the femme-de-chambre to remove her mistress's things from the hotel to Carlton Gardens, she took her daughter home with her in the carriage.

"If your father does not behave as kindly as we could wish," said the good mother, "my excellent sister will receive you as if you were her own child; and I can supply you with all the pecuniary assistance you require until your father relents, and makes, as I am sure he eventually will, a suitable provision for you. So pray be comforted, my dear child, and bear this trial with patience."

The reception of Lady Delmore by her father was, as Mrs. Vernon had predicted, harsh and unkind, and her sister showed nearly as little good feeling. Mr. Vernon's ambition and avarice had deadened all natural affection in his breast; he looked on his children as so many available means of extending his grandeur by their intermarrying with noble and rich partners; but the moment this expectation was frustrated, his dislike became much more marked than his affection had ever been for the child that had so disappointed him.

The kindness and sympathy of her mother was Lady Delmore's only source of consolation under all the mortification to which she was continually subjected; but that kindness had operated a total change in her character. She learned to reflect on her own errors, and to deplore them, to conquer the egotism that had hitherto governed her; and almost disarmed the malignity of her sister by the patience with which she now supported its symptoms, instead of, as in former days, resenting, or provoking fresh attacks.

Happy are they whom misfortune awakens to a sense of their errors! Even the best must own that patience and resignation are the pillars of human peace on earth; for—

> "How poor are they that have not patience!
> What wound did ever heal but by degrees?"

Patience is thrice blessed, giving and receiving good; it disarms anger, or enables us to support its stings and arrows, and we feel after each trial, through which it has supported us, an internal satisfaction that carries balm to the heart.

Mrs. Vernon rejoiced in the change of her daughter's character, but deplored the unfortunate marriage that led to it; yet, can any thing be deemed unfortunate that leads to such results?—and Lady Delmore often told her mother, that perhaps without the rude trial that opened her eyes to her own defects, she might have continued as selfish and frivolous as before. When Mr. Vernon and her sister pointed out to her the satirical notices in the newspapers of the arrest of the carriage in St. James's street, and the flight of Lord Delmore for the Continent, commenting on them with severity, and blaming her as the cause of all, she meekly acknowledged that she was, and added with humility that she should never cease to remember her error with sorrow. Even the obtuse father refrained from reproaching her, and by degrees began to treat her with something as like kindness as his harsh nature was capable of; and her sister forebore taunting her when she found her taunts unanswered.

It was not without violent and unceasing efforts over her naturally irritable temper that Lady Delmore had achieved this conquest of it. Religion was called in to her aid; and when was religion ever invoked in vain, if sought with humility of heart?

> "True religion
> Is always mild, propitious and humble;
> Plays not the tyrant, plants no faith in blood,
> Nor bears destruction on her chariot-wheels,
> But stoops to polish, succour, and redress."

Lady Delmore made it the guide of her actions and the regulator of her thoughts; it led her to judge others with indulgence, and herself only with severity.

Mrs. Vernon now found that she had recovered a daughter when she had least expected such a blessing, and by means the least likely, according to human experience, to accomplish such a change—the marriage of that daughter with a dissolute man of fashion. The ways of Providence are inscrutable, and out of evil is good often produced.

The day that Mrs. Henry Vernon came to invite her brother-in-law's family to be present at the nuptials of her daughter, an invitation which she determined on giving in person, that she might enjoy the malicious pleasure of seeing their mortification, was indeed a trying day to Mr. and Miss Vernon, who were as jealous, and envious in heart, as even Mrs. Henry Vernon could desire. She apologised for not having come more frequently to see them lately, particularly knowing the annoyance they must have had in the very unfortunate marriage of their elder daughter—hoped Louisa would be more fortunate. Apropos

to Louisa: the jewels ordered for their cousin, Miss Burrell, were only inferior in splendor to those presented to her daughter, by the Marquis of Tadcaster.

Louisa became pale with rage at this mal-apropos drawing in of the marriage of Miss Burrell, as apropos to her. She felt all the malice of it, and her aunt rejoiced that she did so. "I have been so occupied," said the spiteful Mrs. Henry Vernon, "in receiving and returning the visits of all the Marquis's family, that I have not had a moment to myself. To be sure, they are delightful people, though perhaps I am partial in my judgment of them, as they are so kind and attentive to me, that I should be ungrateful if I did not highly esteem them. The Duchess of Montressor is to present my daughter, the future Marchioness of Tadcaster, at Court, and it is expected that her diamonds will be the finest of the season." The *parvenu* lady, talking of diamonds as she would of green peas! "The family jewels of the Marquis are esteemed among the finest in England, and he has made considerable additions to them lately. My daughter wished to prevent his doing so, but he was obstinate; and a young man of sixty thousand a year, and in love for the first time, may be allowed to be a little extravagant on such an occasion. Certainly my daughter has reason to be flattered by his preference, when one thinks of all the young ladies that were trying to attract him," (fixing her eyes on Lady Delmore's face, who felt herself blush, not with anger, but with shame, as she remembered her efforts to entrap him.) "But," continued the loquacious lady, "he declares he never felt the slightest preference before; indeed, the Duchess of Montressor tells me the same. Mr. Henry Vernon wished to make a splendid present to our daughter, a present worthy a marchioness, and probably a future duchess; but as among the Marquis's family jewels, there are suits of rubies, emeralds, sapphires, pearls, onyxes, opals, and turquoises, we hardly knew what to do; so I luckily thought of having a marchioness's coronet in diamonds, which we have ordered, and a river of diamonds for her deck. Part of the trousseau is coming from Paris, and the rest is from Howell and James's, in Regent Street. The pocket-handkerchiefs cost ten guineas each; the coronets are embroidered in dead gold, and have a beautiful effect; indeed, I like a marquis's coronet so much, that I shall be almost sorry when my daughter changes it for a ducal, though 'Your Grace' does sound very well."

Mrs. Henry Vernon scarcely allowed time for a word from any of the family, and was elated at observing the depression of their looks; "Would you believe it," said she, turning to her sister-in-law, "Mr. Henry Vernon, instead of rejoicing in our daughter's making such a splendid marriage, is quite in low spirits at the idea of her leaving us. I tell him that this is much too absurd, for surely no one wishes to have his daughters left season after season on his hands," (giving a spiteful look around her.) "But what is more extraordinary is, that my daughter, though very much attached to the Marquis, bursts into tears every time that her separation from us is referred to: this comes from the folly of Mr. Henry Vernon, who has always accustomed himself and her to be in a great degree dependent on each other for happiness, just as if they could be always together, and now they can't bear parting."

Having exhausted all the *bavardage*, with which she came freighted, she prepared to depart, and once more inviting them to the nuptials, she added, "But if it would be too painful to Lady Delmore's feelings to witness a marriage, so soon after her own unfortunate one, I will not press *her* to come; though, to be sure, a marriage by special licence, the ceremony performed by an archbishop, and in a splendid drawing-room, could not be like a Gretna Green wedding." And so saying, she hurried away, declaring she had a thousand things to do, but paused at the door of the boudoir, to tell Miss Vernon that she need not be afraid of meeting Lord Durnford at the marriage, as, out of delicacy to her feelings, they had not asked him; and like a Parthian she fled, throwing her arrow behind.

The rage of Mr. and Miss Vernon broke forth the moment that she who had excited it was out of hearing, and there was no term of reproach that they did not bestow on her. They forgot all the provocations they had given the narrow-minded and spiteful woman; but Mrs. Vernon and Lady Delmore, who remembered them, were less surprised, though equally pained by her obtuse indelicacy. Mr. Vernon declared his decided resolution of not attending the marriage himself, or allowing any of his family to go: a resolution which he adhered to, and which gave his unamiable sister-in-law the opportunity of telling her confidential friends, that the

jealousy and envy of the Carlton Garden family were so great, that they could not support being present at the ceremony. The satisfaction of propagating this belief, amply consoled her for their absence from the nuptials.

## CHAPTER LXI.

"Dublin, I love thee, though with spires ill crown'd,
But hate thy joy-bells' melancholy sound,
And loathe the ill-dressed, idle, brazen crew,
That prowling through thy unswept streets I view,
Ripe for rebellion, spurning order—law;
The maddest, wittiest wights the world e'er saw."

From Howth to Dublin the route excited the admiration of Lord and Lady Oriel. Fine points of view presented themselves at every fresh turn; and the sea spreading out as a vast mirror to reflect the beautiful coast, added to the charms of the scene, which was sadly contrasted by the uncountable shoals of beggars that assailed the carriages at every side, clamorous and persevering beyond all that they had yet experienced. They were struck with the beauty of the streets; but were not pleased with the pedestrians that filled them, a race new to English eyes, appertaining neither to the upper nor lower class, and affecting a swagger and air of idle impudence, that denoted they belonged not to the middling class, which is in general the most truly respectable in all nations.

"What are those people?" asked Lord Oriel of Mr. Desmond. "Are they professional men?—though no; their appearance indicates that they are not."

"A dozen duels would be the inevitable consequence of your question," replied Mr. Desmond, "if any of the worthy individuals who have excited it, heard you. They call themselves Irish gentlemen, have a noble contempt for business, and for the drudgery it entails, and occupy their leisure-hours in attending political meetings, each individual being persuaded that, under the auspices of the Agitator, he may aspire to representing some county in Ireland in a British parliament; 'as sure his cousin Jack, or his friend Bill, has got into the House of Commons, and why should not he?' Those who formerly bounded their ambition to some of the liberal professions, the church, the law, physic, or commerce, now despise such avocations; and to be an M. P. seems to them a distinction too easily attained, not to be sought; this has therefore become the end and aim of all their pursuits. They look on the Agitator as the Corypheus who is to lead them to glory, and are too short-sighted to see that he is destroying the country he affects to protect. Poor Ireland is indeed fallen; and the specimens she sends over to England to sow the seeds of dissension in the parliament, and to reap the harvest in the fields, prove alike her degradation. When I last visited the House of Commons," continued Mr. Desmond, "I could not name half-a-dozen of the new Irish members. I looked in vain for influential men of property or station, men whose grandfathers or fathers were known to me, or whose names at least were familiar to my ear; but I could see only O'Blarney and his protegés, ready to vociferate against England, and endeavoring to arouse the turbulent to assist them by appeals to their passions."

"The party found apartments ready for them at Morison's Hotel, and were gratified by the cleanliness and comfort of the house, and the attention of the master and his assistants. Having left their names at the castle, an invitation to dinner was sent them for the next day, and a select party of the *élite* of the Dublin fashionables were assembled to meet them.

The Marquis of Mona, undismayed by all the misrepresentations so industriously circulated to decrease his popularity in Ireland, continued to discharge his duty there with a courage and calmness as remarkable as that he evinced when, after the memorable and glorious battle of Waterloo, he submitted to the operation of amputation without wincing, showing that he was no less distinguished for mental than for bodily courage. Lord Oriel observed to Mr. Desmond, that with all his preconceived opinion of the high courage and generosity of the Irish character, he thought it would have been impossible for the government to have chosen a nobleman more calculated to suit them than the Marquis of Mona.

The most agreeable part of the Dublin society is that to which strangers, making a short stay, have the least chance of being admitted. It consists of the gentlemen of the Irish bar, who are as remarkable for their wit and other agreeable qualities as for their hospitality; and the few families to whom Mr. and Mrs. Desmond presented Lord and Lady Oriel, gave them a most favorable impression of that circle.

They found Lord and Lady Abberville constant visitors at the Castle and the Phœnix Park; the noble lord intruding his opinions on the Viceroy and Secretary, unmindful of the little attention they received, and my lady trying to make herself useful to the Marchioness of Mona, whose dignified mind shrank from the intriguante with instinctive dread, and whose ears were closed to the innuendoes, scandalous stories, and malicious tales, she sought to instil into them, against all whose reception she wished to preclude.

"And so, after all," said Lady Abberville to the Marchioness, "Lord and Lady Oriel are living together. Well, some men can bear any thing, and he must be wilfully blind. She really must have good nerves to present herself so unblushingly, after her affair with Lord Delmore; and the Desmonds and Forresters, for moral people are very indulgent,"

Lady Mona changed the subject, with a coldness of manner that marked her disapproval; and the wily Lady Abberville, who quickly saw she had done wrong in attacking Lady Oriel, dexterously shifted her ground, by observing, that she had been out of England all the time, and only heard of the affair through the papers, and from the letters of Lady Wellborough and Lady Nottingham, who, she must say, were a little disposed to be spiteful on such occasions. For her part, she had always liked Lady Oriel, and thought her a very charming person, and therefore she should pay her all the attention in her power, especially as her dear Lady Mona was a friend of hers.

The Desmonds and Colonel Forrester were astonished to see the courage with which Lady Abberville advanced and seized Lady Oriel's hand, and proclaimed her delight at seeing her in Ireland; trusted she would spend some time with Lord Abberville and herself at their seat; for though Lady Oriel would find no place in Ireland like Oriel Park, still if she could be content with more homely accommodation, they would make up in the heartiness of their welcome, for what they wanted in splendor. She said she had felt delighted at the marriage of Colonel Forrester to their charming neighbor; it was so gratifying to have an English person settled at Springmount; one who would certainly do much good; for poor Mr. Desmoud, though the best man in the world, was a little obsolete in his notions, and could not enter into the true character of the Irish people. She had made the Lord Lieutenant *au fait* of the real state of the country, and he had profited very much by her suggestion; but still he seemed strangely opposed to the building a barrack in their neighborhood, the only plan that could tranquillise the country, and which she trusted Colonel Forrester would aid in getting carried into effect.

Lady Oriel was only relieved by the arrival of the gentlemen from the dining-room, when Lady Abberville left her to go and assail the Marquis of Mona, whose good breeding was put to the test by the tiresome and persevering efforts of the manœuvring lady to carry her point of the barrack. There was not a country gentleman present, of whom Lady Abberville had not a request to make. Presentments to be passed, canals to be made, barracks to be built, and markets to be removed to some village of her Lord's, to force said village into a town—these were the subjects of her conversation to each; and they seemed to dread her approach as something that would draw them into present *ennui* and future trouble. Her legs seemed to be as active as her tongue, for she was to be seen as well as heard in every corner of the room; and it was not until the carriages were announced, that she ceased to entreat, suggest, or cajole whichever best suited the person addressed, on every point on which she required assistance.

Lady Oriel, who had only seen her in England, as the creature of the patronesses of the exclusive *clique*, was surprised to view her in her new character: but the motive of her actions in both were the same —self-interest.

"If all the Irish ladies were like Lady Abberville," said Lady Oriel to Mrs. Desmond, "how I should dread them! There is no retreating from her, and it is equally disagreeable to be treated by her as a friend or enemy."

"She is an odious person I must admit,' replied Mrs. Desmond—"*une vrai intriguante*, deterred by no feelings of delicacy, and guided by no principle, save self-interest, in the pursuit of her egotistical plans. I consider her vicinity to Springmount its greatest drawback; but, luckily, she only comes to Ireland, when driven by necessity. Then while she is here, no post arrives that does not waft her over all the tittle-tattle of the *clique* she has left behind, and the harmless and silly *niaiseries* of her friends. Lady Wellborough and Lady Nottingham are quoted to us, seasoned by the malice of the quoter, until they assume a meaning much

more palpable than the ladies with whom they originated ever intended they should bear; for nothing passes through the mind or lips of Lady Abberville, without being tainted by the *mechanceté* of her nature. She does so much mischief, that I cannot speak of her with the forbearance I wish to use; and she is the only person in female form that Mr. Desmond has an antipathy to."

The party were invited to Marino, the beautiful residence of Lord and Lady Castlemont, the former, the worthy successor of his noble and excellent father, and the latter, as peerless in reputation as in beauty, offering a bright model of perfection in female virtue and loveliness. They passed a most agreeable day at Marino, and allowed that all they had heard of the charms of Irish hospitality exceeded not the reality.

Their next visit was to Kilruddy, the fine seat of Lord Leath, beautifully situated near Bray, where the beauty of the park, the solid elegance and comfort of the house and the amiability of the owners, called forth their warmest approbation, and realised all they had imagined of the *bon-hommie* and ease of manner of the Irish nobility, who unite all the advantages to be derived from other countries to the cheerfulness and warmth of heart peculiar to their own.

An invitation from the Duke and Duchess of Cartoun, to visit Cartoun, was too tempting to be resisted; and they were delighted with the frank and cordial reception that welcomed them from the excellent and patriotic duke, and his truly amiable duchess.

"What a delightful place Ireland would be to reside in," said Lord Oriel, "if the country was only tranquil! And surely, the presence of all the Irish nobility, if they resemble the three families we have visited, could not fail to have the happiest effect on the habits and minds of the people. I must say, that I blame the absentees for much of the mischief that has occurred; though you, who have had more power of judging, look as if you differed from me."

"I," replied Mr. Desmond, "look on absenteeism as a consequence, and not as a cause of the troubles that have been so long and so loudly attributed to it. I know districts where the landed proprietors have constantly resided on their estates, doing all the good in their power; and yet no sooner did the Agitator wave his sceptre, and his satellites work on the minds of the ignorant peasantry, than they shook off their allegiance to their old and tried friends, forgetful of years of benefits received, and unmindful of all, save the excitation of the moment. One of the noblemen we have visited, who has been a constant resident on his estate, and who might serve as a model for landlords and neighbors, has had the mortification of seeing his son (a most amiable and enlightened young man,) defeated in an election for a place he had represented honorably and conscientiously, and where his constituents could have no doubt of the zeal and honesty with which he would advocate their interest. There must be a reciprocity of benefits between landlord and tenant, to make the tie that unites them, advantageous and lasting; and if a landlord knows that, notwithstanding, years of kindness and forbearance on his part, and apparent content on that of his tenants, any popular excitement may turn them against him, he has but little encouragement to remain in a land where a sense of duty is the only incitement. Nothing can tend so much to injure a country, as the dissemination of dissensions between landlord and tenant, artfully leading both parties to suppose that their interests are separate; yet those who profess to be the friends of Ireland have invariably pursued this system, and its baneful effects are but too visible. You, my dear Lord Oriel, like all who judge of Ireland without a personal knowledge of it, are disposed to think harshly of absentees; but few reflect on the misery of residing in a country, where laws are trampled on, and murder and rapine stalk abroad in open day. An outcry is raised at every attempt that is made to coerce the lawless and turbulent, and to check them in their fearful career of crime. We hear that the liberty of the subject is violated—that a death blow is aimed at the British constitution; but those who make this outcry forget, or at least mention not, that not only the liberties, but the lives of the respectable and peaceful subjects in Ireland, are attacked every day, and that, to preserve the liberty of the lawless—to leave them the power of slaying, flogging and burning, the respectable part are enslaved, and tremble under the reign of terror established by the infuriated people, who, goaded on to madness by the inflammatory speeches and letters addressed to their passions, commit the most fearful crimes. For myself," continued Mr. Desmond, "though abhorring the crimes of these infatuated people, I cannot abhor themselves—'I love the offenders, but detest the offence;'

and all my anger is against those who excite them to such deeds. Patriotism, love of liberty, devotion to country—sacred words, that ought never to be profaned, are the watchwords, the war-cry, to lead this unhappy people to murder, pillage and destruction; and those who are compelled to vote for a political measure, which the exigence of the times demands, an exigence brought on by evil counsels, are denounced by those who have reduced Ireland to this fearful crisis as her worst enemies and enslavers, and pointed out to the vengeance of the misled populace. No country can be a fit residence for independent and honorable men, where the worst of all tyranny is established—that of brutal force, and where those who most love and worship liberty are forced to support measures that seem to assail it, in order to arrest the crimes committed in her name. The bill about to be passed in parliament, furnishes ample subject for the attacks and reproaches of the faction who have rendered it necessary; but if it did not pass, what would be the fate of the respectable and well disposed class of the people in Ireland? The question is, are the well-conducted and orderly, to be left to the tender mercies of the infuriated miscreants who have taken the law into their own hands, or are measures, strong and illegal as they may be considered, to be taken to protect the good, and check the bad? Look at the run made on the banks for gold; you see how soon the hint given on this subject was taken, and the unthinking people reflect not on the inevitable consequences which must draw an accumulation of distress and misery on their heads by depressing the markets, and deteriorating the value of the produce they have to sell. Every reaction following events of this kind, is fraught with misery, and the senseless people, instead of opening their eyes to the *cause*, look only at the *effect*, and blame government for the inevitable consequences of their own folly. The Irish have been accustomed to look up to the English as lovers of liberty and protectors of the oppressed; this opinion, and the respect it produced, it has been the study of the faction, who have convulsed Ireland for the last few years, to destroy, and the reason is obvious. If the sober-minded and influential class in England have opposed themselves to this faction, as it was clear from the beginning they would, it became necessary to depreciate them, and extirpate all sympathy between them and the Irish, to prevent the latter from seeing the real state of public opinion in England, with respect to their self-constituted rulers. To explain to the ignorant multitude, why the English rose not *en masse* to support the Irish demagogues, it was necessary to misrepresent the nation, and have it imagined, that as they would not countenance murder, rapine, and all the excesses of license, they no longer worshipped liberty."

## CHAPTER LXII.

"Erin, thy verdant sea-girt shore
Was never meant for slaves to tread,
Though dimm'd are now the days of yore
When monarchs for thee fought and bled,
When knowledge open'd her fair page,
And glory wide her flag unfurl'd,
Thou wert the boast of a past age,
The bright gem of the western world.
But faded is thy glory now,
Nought but thy courage rests with thee;
A reckless courage that, I trow,
Has led thee on to misery!"

While visiting the beautiful environs of Dublin, Lord and Lady Oriel remarked to each other, that it was strange so fine a city and so beautiful a country drew so few travellers to visit them.

"We English are strange people," said Lord Oriel. "We should think it a reproach not to have seen every city in France and Italy, and not to have made ourselves familiar with the fine scenery of other countries. But how few of us are acquainted with Ireland! and had we not been tempted by the desire of visiting our friends, we most probably never should have seen the romantic and fine country now before us, which, we must admit, is more worthy of admiration than many of those places which the wealthy and the idle travel thousands of miles to admire. I think this indifference to the beauties of Ireland, on the part of England, has done much to keep us in ignorance of the real state of the country, and consequently to prevent our having reflected on the best means of ameliorating the grievances under which she has long groaned."

"I agree with you," said Mr. Desmond, "for I have often deplored the ignorance of the members in both houses of parliament on the subject of Ireland—an ignorance which makes them listen with disbelief to many statements founded on fact, and with credulity to too many founded on falsehood. That Ireland has long suffered from misrule, one must be sceptical to deny; that she has many grievances to complain of, it would be more than folly

to refuse to believe: but, instead of searching to discover the original malady, and to remove it, anodynes and palliatives have been applied, which have only yielded a temporary relief, and the disease has burst forth with renewed force from the slumber it had taken. Opium can still and blunt the sense of pain; but it removes not the cause and the remedies applied to Ireland have been opiates from which she has awakened with increased excitability, the sense of suffering rendered more acute by the reaction arising from the temporary relief. It is not want of good-will, but want of knowledge, of which the persons who have treated the maladies of Ireland, are to be accused. They have not studied the idiosyncrasy of the country, which demands a knowledge and reflection that few of those who are capable, are disposed to give it. That Ireland has for centuries been misgoverned, no better proof can be given than the facility with which she yields to every ignorant and designing charlatan who wishes to try experiments on her: like the wretched invalid who is ready to submit to the remedies of every quack who prescribes for him. A sound constitution and healthy state would preclude such dangerous experiments; and, instead of blaming the political charlatans who have practised on Ireland and fatted on her diseases, we should blame the supine negligence that has allowed the disease to make a progress so appalling, as to throw the country into such hands. Had Ireland been properly governed, there would be no agitators, for without grievances they could not exist; but hitherto the original malady has been over-looked while finding remedies for the dangerous symptoms; and even now, the bill that arrests the progress of murder, does nothing towards removing the irritation that gave the agitators the power of increasing the crime. Such conduct is like that of allowing a brain-fever to pursue its ravages on a patient, while we are content with confining him in a straight-waistcoat; we may prevent the effects of his own madness from bringing destruction on others, but we do not prevent the disease from destroying himself. The bill must, therefore, be followed by measures of wisdom and justice, and they can only be administered by a knowledge of the causes of the original evil. Ireland has had some of the most able and willing statesmen that England could boast, as her secretaries, who, had they arrived in Ireland with only half the knowledge and experience relative to it with which they left it, might have done much to relieve the burthen under which she has writhed so long; but certain peculiarities, the result of her grievances, render it more difficult to acquire a correct knowledge of the true state of the country than can be imagined by those who are accustomed to plain and open dealing. Misrepresentations, taking the hue of every political faction, come pouring in on the secretary on his arrival; his ears, habituated to the matter-of-fact details of business of the veracity-loving English, are ill calculated to sift the grains of truth from the vast chaff of falsehood in which they are confounded; and finding himself continually deceived, his credulity becomes metamorphosed into its opposite extreme, and he who believed too much, learns to doubt too largely. Disgusted with the prevarications and cunning he meets—which, by the by, are the invariable consequences of ill-treatment on weak and ignorant minds—he learns but too often to despise those whom he had come to pity and to serve, and to consider their defects as the *cause* instead of the *effect* of their troubles."

After a stay of ten days in Dublin, the party proceeded on their route to Springmount, and were much gratified by the beauty of the country through which they passed: hill and dale, and those beautiful mountains, clear streams, and rapid rivers, peculiar to Ireland, continually called forth their admiration. The excellence of the provisions at the inns at which they stopped, surprised them; and Lady Oriel declared that the butter was more delicate and finely flavored than any she had ever before eaten; it looked and tasted as if the cows had fed only on buttercups and primroses. The slim-cake, and hot griddle-bread, luxuries to be had only in Ireland, met with great success; and the newly laid eggs were pronounced to be so good, as to verify the Irishman's boast, that "sure it was only Irish hens that ever laid fresh eggs." The crimped salmon, with its white curdy veil, letting its rose-color appear through, was allowed to be far superior to any English salmon they had ever tasted; and speckled trout, fresh from the water, was pronounced matchless.

The air of cordial welcome with which the Desmond family were received at all the inns, might have led a satirical observer to recollect the lines ending with, "The warmest welcome always at an inn;" but the present party attributed it, as in truth they ought, to the respect and regard entertained for them, and the "Och!

sure, 'tis we that are proud and contint, to see your Honors back again in the poor ould counthry," had a warmth that carried conviction of its sincerity.

On passing over a common, Lady Oriel was surprised and shocked at seeing a flock of nondescript birds, resembling geese, but without feathers, trembling beneath the chill breeze that was wafted from the mountains. Being in a light open carriage, she called out to the postilion, "Pray, what are those birds?"

"Sure, plaise your honor's ladyship, they are geese, and they play h—ll with 'em in this counthry, seeing as how they sell the clothes off their backs."

There was no resisting this answer, and Lord and Lady Oriel laughed heartily at it, though the postilion added with a grave face, "Faith, it's no laughing matter for the poor geese any way:"—a truth they were by no means disposed to doubt.

Arrived at Copoquin, the beauty of the scenery induced them to remain a day or two there, that they might explore it; they had a boat to convey them over the limpid and rapid Black-water river, a misnomer, as the water is peculiarly clear, but which is said to have been so called from its banks having been once so thickly wooded that the dark trees threw a deep shadow over the river, nearly excluding the light—hence it was called Black-water.

They stopped to view Drumana, the ancient and beautiful seat of the noble family of Grandison, the last of whose earls resided there in a style of princely hospitality, and attracted many guests by private theatricals, to enact which he fitted up a very tasteful theatre. Our present king, then a midshipman, spent some days at Drumana, and entered into its gaieties with all the spirit and vivacity peculiar to his age and profession, leaving behind him an impression that even still exists of the frankness, good humor, and condescension of Prince William Henry, as the old inhabitants still call his Majesty. Various anecdotes and bon-mots are repeated relative to this memorable visit, all highly flattering to the illustrious visitor; and the persons who remember him, declare that they are quite sure that his Majesty, even though he is a king, does not forget the happy days he spent at Drumana, as a gay and frolic-loving reefer.

"Och! then, wasn't it a grand sight," said an old woman to the party, "to see a king's son, born and bred in palaces, sent to sea just like the child of any private gentleman, and treated no better, and just laughing and playing for all the world as if he had never seen any greater grandeur? Sure, we always thought that such great people never laughed or played themselves, but only kept others to do it for 'em. But, faith, Prince William Henry showed us the contrary, for he was the first in every frolic, and long as it is since that happy time, I think even now I see him, with his rosy cheeks and laughing eyes, as gay as a summer's morning, with something kind to say to every person who came near him."

"Ay, and something kind to do, too," interrupted the husband; "for I well remember he snatched a kiss from you, Peggy, which made me jealous enough at the time, though now I think it's a great honor that my poor old woman should have been kissed by a king."

"Don't be bragging, Davy," said the wife, "for sure the ladies can't believe that such a poor ould woman as I am, ever had so great an honor."

"Ay, Peggy," said the husband, "sure the whole country round knows that you were the prettiest girl in the barony, and what's more, the most modest and decent; and there never was any grand company at the great house, but what the good lord and lady used to send for Peggy to show 'em an Irish beauty."

"Well, Davy," said the ould woman, "there's no remains of that now. It's only the heart that rests the same, and sure that's for all the world like a large sound nut in a withered shell, where it hasn't room."

"Never mind, my ould woman," said Davy, patting her on the shoulder with a look of ineffable affection; "I wouldn't give the ould shell for the freshest and greenest husk that ever covered a filbert in the brown woods of Drumana."

Nothing can be more picturesque or beautiful than Drumana. The house stands boldly on an eminence, commanding a view of the fine river that winds along its banks and almost washes its base, and the woods around are crowned by mountains that give sublimity to the whole. Mr. Desmond had ordered a dinner peculiar to that part of the country, to be prepared in the grounds. It consisted of salmon caught for the occasion, and cut into large slices; a fire of wood was kindled on a stone, and each piece of the salmon on a long wooden skewer was stuck in the earth round the fire, and occasionally sprinkled with salt and water, and turned until roasted; potatoes dressed *a l' Irlandaise*, and Black-

water cider, as sparkling as champagne, formed a repast that the English visitors declared to be one of the most delicious of which they had ever partaken; and Peggy and her husband who superintended it, were delighted with the commendations it received.

They returned to Capoquin to sleep in rooms breathing of lavender, it being the common custom in many parts of Ireland to keep quantities of this fragrant flower dried in their presses and drawers; and the murmuring of the pellucid stream flowing under the windows of the inn soothed them into slumber.

The next day they proceeded to Lismore, the whole route passing along the banks of the Black-water, and offering the most richly wooded and romantic points of view.

Perhaps there is nothing in Ireland more beautiful than the entrance to Lismore. The fine bridge, and picturesque castle above it, which overhangs the river at a height that makes the head grow dizzy to look down it; the woods and mountains around, and the velvet lawns of the grounds of Mrs. Scott, offer a picture rarely equalled, and never surpassed. In this castle was born Robert Boyle, the celebrated philosopher, a circumstance that adds much to the interest with which it is viewed, and excites speculative surmises as to how far the sublime and beautiful scenery around might have influenced the turn of his mind, even at the early age at which he left Lismore, to pursue his studies at Eton.

The union of such powerful genius and talent, such strong religious principles, simple habits, and affectionate disposition, had always endeared the memory of this celebrated man to the persons who were now viewing the place where he first saw the light, and there was almost a religious reverence in the feelings with which they examined the venerable ruin. The present owner of Lismore, the Duke of Devonshire, is deservedly popular there; he has expended large sums in improvement, and resided some months on the spot, where his kindness and extensive charities have left a warm sentiment of gratitude and attachment.

The party arrived at Springmount on a fine summer's evening, when the sky and earth wore their brightest looks, and the Oriels were charmed with the romantic beauty of the spot. Springmount was a castellated mansion, standing on a gentle eminence, commanding a fine view of the river and adjacent country, and nearly embosomed in woods, surrounded by high mountains, losing themselves in the clouds. The fine picturesque mountains in Ireland never fail to attract the admiration of those accustomed to the tamer scenery of England, and add peculiar beauty to the landscapes.

The apartments at Springmount were spacious, and fitted up with a due regard to comfort and elegance. Pictures, statues, and vases, collected during the travels of Mr. Desmond, who was not only an amateur, but a connoisseur in the fine arts, ornamented the salons; and an extensive and well-chosen library offered resources of no ordinary kind to studious visitors. The principal rooms opened on a terrace of tesselated marble, whence flights of steps descended to the pleasure-grounds, through which the limpid and rapid river hurried along its impetuous course, never pausing to admire the beauties it reflected on its glassy surface. A stone bridge of one arch, finely proportioned, and ornamented with a light balustrade of marble, was thrown across the river, and a pleasure-boat was moored near a picturesque boat house for the amusement of the guests. A sunk fence of wide dimensions divided the pleasure-grounds from the deer park; but in wandering through the mazes of the former, the beautiful animals that sported free as air were visible, and gave a wildness and animation to the scene. Thrushes and blackbirds innumerable enlivened the umbrageous shades, and sent forth their notes of joy; and the lonely Philomel, at eve, was heard to warble her melancholy song, while the russet corn-creak, hopping like a partridge over the velvet lawns, repeated her clear, shrill cuckoo, which was echoed around till it died in distance.

A repose reigned round Springmount that was delicious to those who had been shut up in the confined atmosphere of London. There is a peculiar lightness in the air in Ireland, which—whether it be attributable to the mountains, or to the Atlantic, we leave casuists to examine—brings healing on its wings to the over-excited mind, as well as to the exhausted body; and the visiters felt this benign influence, as with elastic spirits they arose, the morning after their arrival, to wander through the grounds, and admire the taste and judgment with which they were laid out.

They entered the breakfast-room as the bell summoned them to that repast, and found a table plentifully piled with all the luxuries that Ireland can furnish. Honey,

bright and sparkling as topaz, raspberry jam that might vie in tint with the ruby, fruit of every description, and cream and butter such as Erin alone can produce, graced the board.

After breakfast Mrs. Desmond and Mrs. Forrester proposed driving through the park, to show Lady Oriel the finest points of view; and Mrs. Forrester requested that they might pass the gates and extend their drive to the cottage of Grace Cassidy.

"You have shown us some good specimens of English peasantry," said Mrs. Forrester, "and I am impatient, dear Lady Oriel, to show you our choicest sample in Grace Cassidy."

We pass over the drive through the really fine park, which had the usual quantity of stately trees to be found in old parks, but a very unusual inequality of ground, presenting hill and dale, and lawns intersected with groups of trees, with the river winding through them, and glittering beneath the sunbeams, like a vast azure-colored serpent, coiling itself along. Lady Oriel was delighted with the views and the country, and confessed that henceforth she should find all scenery tame that had not mountains to diversify them, so much did they add to the beauty of the landscape.

Mrs. Forrester was gratified by the admiration her natal residence excited; and acknowledged that much as she liked England, she always, while there, felt the want of her native mountains, and hailed them on her return as old and dear friends.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

"Now let us thank th' eternal Power: convinced
That heaven but tries our virtue by affliction:
That oft the cloud which wraps the present hour,
Serves but to brighten all our future days."

When the landau stopped at the little gate of the rustic paling that enclosed the garden of Grace Cassidy from the road, she arose from her spinning-wheel, and came forth to receive the ladies. She wore her dark hair combed back from her high and open forehead, leaving her long and jetty brows uncovered; a small mob cap, neatly plaited, and white as snow, gave an almost Quaker simplicity to the character of her head; her kerchief crossed her fair bosom, and the ends were confined by an apron, that nearly covered the pale blue calimanco quilted petticoat, and left her small ankles and well-formed feet exposed. Her gown was of flowered chintz, the sleeves coming only to the elbows, and was open in front, so as to leave the petticoat in sight, the waist long, and the skirt plaited with fulness. A small collar of narrow black velvet lent additional whiteness to her fair throat, and black mittens half concealed her roundly-turned arms. She wore blue stockings, and silver buckles in her shoes; and from her waist hung a silver chain to which was attached her pincushion, scissors, and key.

Such was the holiday suit of Grace, who, anticipating the probability of the ladies passing by her cottage, and stopping to speak to her, had dressed herself in her best clothes, to do honor to their presence. The delicacy and grace of her slim figure, the piquancy and animation of her countenance, joined to her picturesque attire, rendered her a most attractive-looking person; and Lady Oriel accused Mrs. Forrester for not having prepared her to expect so much beauty; declaring in French, to spare Grace's modesty, that she had "never beheld so pretty a peasant."

"Och! my honored mistress and my dear young lady, what a happy day it is for me to see you back again! My very heart jumps for joy." And seizing the hands held out to her by the two ladies, she pressed them to her lips.—"Sure, I could not close my eyes last night for the gladness I felt at the thoughts of seeing you this blessed day, and I thought to myself that joy can drive away sleep as well as grief, which I never suspected before."

The *naïveté* with which this confession was made, excited a smile from the ladies; and Lady Oriel, in French, requested that they would encourage Grace to talk, for her mellifluous brogue and simple shrewdness highly amused and interested her. They entered the cabin, or cottage, as it deserves to be called, and complimented Grace on its perfect neatness and good order. Everything was in its place, and an air of comfort pervaded the whole, that was highly gratifying to her visitors. The perfume of the flowers from the garden was wafted through the open casement and freshly-gathered nosegays adorned the dresser and the window sill.

When the ladies were seated, Grace pointed to the clock and said, "Och! dear young lady, that is, Mrs. Forrester I mean, for sure, though you're still a young lady, it's not proper for me to be calling you so, just as if you were not married; every time I look at that elegant and beautiful clock, I think of you, and bless you; and sure the blessing of even a poor simple creature like

me, coming from the heart, can't but do good. There never was any thing that puts serious and blessed thoughts into the head like a clock; when I am alone here at my work, it seems such good company to me, that I almost consider it like a living creature; and when I hear it go tick, tick, sure it seems as if it was reminding me that time is passing swiftly away, and that I must not waste it. Then there's its hand, pointing always to the coming hour, like hope, and only pausing a moment at that hour, and then advancing to another; it's like the time it marks, always passing yet still the same, for it's us that change, and not time. Sure there's eternity in the thoughts a clock puts into the mind; there it stands, showing us all the hours we pass, each one of which brings us nearer to the last hour of life. But sure I'm forgetting myself, to talk so boldly before such grand company."

The ladies encouraged Grace, and she proceeded, "Well then, ladies, I declare that somehow or other, that clock makes me think as I never thought before I had it—of how quick life is passing away—our hours and minutes are counted, even as are counted the hours by the steady hand advancing round the dial; and it makes me reflect on the necessity of preparing for that hour when, though we can no longer trace the warning hand of the clock, it will still remain to convey the same lesson to others. Och! what fine thoughts are to be found in simple things, if one had the gift to express 'em as one feels 'em. The flowers that spring up delight us, and fade even while we are enjoying their fragrance. The trees, lately the pride of the fields, whose leaves wither and die, all seem intended to remind us that every thing must perish, to reconcile us to the same fate, and to prepare us for it."

There was a solemnity in Grace's look and manner, that not even her strongly Irish accent could impair; and Lady Oriel felt a sympathy for her, that no person of her class had ever before excited in her mind.

"How is your husband, Grace?" asked Mrs. Forrester.

"Indeed then, ma'am, it's finely he is, and quite come to his senses again, and stays at home at nights, and minds his work by day, just as he used to do before he ever heard of them poor foolish Repalers. Perhaps it's all for the best that he took that mad turn, though it did make one miserable at the time, for, sure, I was not sensible enough of my happiness, until I thought it had left me; and now it is come back, I feel as if I never could be thankful enough to God. We are sad ungrateful creatures, and go on from day to day enjoying all the good that Providence sends us, just as if we had a right to it, but when misfortune comes, we then begin to know the value of our past happiness, though it only makes us more discontented with present troubles. How few, like me, have had the blessing to recover what they had lost! and this makes me remember every hour with gratitude what I owe to the Almighty."

The blue eyes of Grace became suffused with tears, and as she wiped them with the corner of her apron, she observed, with a smile, 'There are tears of sorrow, tears of joy, and tears of thankfulness. Mine are the last, and they refresh me as the dews of heaven refresh the earth, and lighten my heart when it is weighed down by the sense of my own unworthiness and of the goodness of God."

"Grace, I have been telling Lady Oriel of the delicious buttermiik you used to give me to drink," said Mrs. Forrester; "have you any at present?"

"Och! it's myself that has," replied Grace, "for I churned this morning at the peep of day, thinking ye would be passing this way, and have kept the can of buttermilk in spring-water in the dairy. Sure, if the lady would be so condescending as to taste it, I'd be mighty proud, and if you'd all of ye just eat a bit of my griddle-cake and kirkime,* it's a favor and an honor too, that I'd never forget."

The ladies accepted Grace's offer; who, spreading on a table a cloth as white as a snow-drop, made of the yarn of her own spinning, placed a wooden piggin, equally white, piled with kirkime in the centre, a griddle-cake at one end, and a jug of buttermilk at the other, with small piggins for the ladies to drink out of, and wooden knives for the butter—the Irish being as particular to use wooden knives for butter, as the higher class of English are, to use only silver. Grace waited on her guests with an alacrity and delight, that proved the gratification she felt at the occupation; and Lady Oriel declared she had never partaken of a more delicious repast.

Grace wished to present the ladies with nosegays, and for this purpose would have plucked half the flowers in her garden; but they prevented her, reminding her that

* Eggs boiled hard, and chopped in fresh butter.

they had such abundance at home, that they preferred seeing them in the garden.

The party drove away, followed by the blessings and grateful curtsies of Grace, who remained at the door until the carriage had vanished from her view, and then entered, repeating aloud to herself, "Was there ever such dear, kind, good ladies? No pride in 'em, and so pleased with every thing in my cottage, when, sure, every thing I have I owe to them. How I wish Jim could have seen 'em seated round that table, praising every thing, and so condescending to me. But, och! sure I quite forgot to tell 'em about poor Mary Mahoney and her husband. This was very thoughtless of me, and shows the truth of the old saying, that when one is happy oneself, one forgets those who are unhappy. Well, sure, I'll go and see poor Mary to-morrow, and then go to the great house, to tell 'em all about her, for I know she depends on me. What would she think, the poor dear creature, if she knew how I have neglected to speak about her?"

When Jim returned from his work, Grace told him of the visit she had received, and dwelt with delight and gratitude on the kindness of the old mistress, the lady, and the sweet manners of the beautiful young English lady.

"Is she as handsome as Mrs. Forrester?" asked Jim, for, according to my notions, she is the biggest beauty of a lady in all Ireland. I say of a lady, Grace, bekase I know one that in my eyes, is twice as handsome, and not a hundred miles off at this moment. Faith, you blush, Grace ma-colleen, just as if you knew who I mean, though sure I have not told you her name."

"Och! Jim agrah, I wouldn't be making comparisons between the two ladies, but what the difference between 'em is, I could tell you. Mrs. Forrester looks as if she had never known trouble, and that tears had never filled her eyes, though she's one that, if the trouble came, would bear it nobly, for she's full of feeling. She's like a fresh rose in full bloom, before the sun or the wind has faded it. But the other lady looks as if tears were no strangers to her eyes, for all they're so bright, and that they had looked up to Heaven so often when troubled on this earth, that they stole the soft blue of the sky when she is letting fall the tears of night. One would like to tell Mrs. Forrester all one's happiness, for one knows she would feel it, and rejoice at it; but one would choose that English lady to tell all one's griefs, to, because one sees that she has learned to pity others, by having suffered herself, great, and grand, and beautiful as she is. Mrs. Forrester, Jim, gives me the notion of an angel, and the other lady that of a saint."

The husband of Mary Mahoney had been tried and acquitted of the charge brought against him: but he returned to his suffering wife with ruined health, the consequence of a gaol-fever, and totally incapable of working. The poor woman, too, had never recovered her premature confinement, and continued in a languishing state; both unable to make any exertion for their support. Grace and her husband assisted them to the utmost of their power; but the broken constitutions of the luckless couple required many comforts which the Cassidys lacked the means, though not the inclination to give them. The Repealers in the neighborhood, looking on Mahoney as a political victim, wished to identify his cause as their own, and made a subscription between them, amounting to a few pounds, which they sent him, with an inflated letter, expressive of their sympathy for his situation, their hatred of tyranny and injustice that had led to it, and their determination to support and avenge him. This epistle was signed by the most prominent of the faction, with "Repealer" added to each name; and the subscribers were known to be the most lawless and ill-conducted men in the parish.

When the letter and money were delivered to Mahoney, he was in the greatest distress, undergoing all the privations that poverty can impose, with a beloved wife pining in languor before his eyes, and whom proper nourishment might restore to health. The poor man read the letter, and then laid it on the table, casting a wistful glance at the money, and then at the pale cheek and attenuated person of his wife; the purse which contained it seemed to him as if it held the elixir of life, and his affection for Mary almost triumphed over his principles; but a second perusal of the letter restored him to himself, and he determined to return the money to the donors.

Mary watched the changes in his countenance, and asked him what the letter was about; and when he read it to her, and told her his decision, she left her chair, and approaching the one he reclined in, pressed her lips to his forehead, and a tear fell on his face at the moment.

"God be praised! cuishlamachree," ex-

claimed she, "that you have had courage to resist this temptation! I know it was for me that you looked so wistfully for a moment at the purse; but heaps of gold could not give me the happiness that the certainty of your good principles has given me."

"Och, Mary, ma-vourneen," replied the poor man, "poverty is a frightful thing, for it leaves a body open to such temptations, and he who would remain honest ought to keep away want, or pray to have a friend like you to prop up his tottering good resolutions when he is tempted. I have had enough of Repealers, and wish I might never hear the name again; but their money shall not pay the price of our broken health and broken hearts—no; I'd rather die than touch it! You see they don't give it, as good neighbors, to a poor and suffering man and woman, but they want to make me pass for a victim to tyranny and injustice, when I'm only a victim to my own wilful folly, in not listening to your advice, and attending to their wicked and pernicious counsels. It is true, I was not guilty of the crime laid to my charge, and God be thanked! my innocence was proved; but had I not been in the habit of going out at night, and, at all unseasonable hours, of attending their meetings, I could not have been suspected; so that all my sufferings have been brought on by myself, and what's worse, my own dear Mary, all yours."

"Never think of mine, cuishlamachree," replied Mary; "sure, now that your eyes are open, and that our thoughts are the same, I'm a happy woman; and if I saw you once more in good health, I'd have nothing on earth to desire."

The purse was returned to the Repealers, with a candid exposition of the altered views and feelings of Mahoney, who was voted by them a turncoat and a coward, and strongly suspected to be a spy; a suggestion that only one of the faction had the good sense to doubt, and who made the simple observation, that a spy would not have declared his dereliction from them, as Mahoney had done, but would have imposed on them to the last.

From the moment that Mahoney refused the aid of the Repealers, he became a marked man with them; his horse was houghed, his cow maimed, his pigs killed, and his garden, that spot which had been the pride and pleasure of poor Mary, was uprooted, the paling destroyed, and every plant, flower, and vegetable, was scattered over the road. Mr. Disnay, the venerable and worthy pastor, came to the assistance of the unhappy couple, and relieved their wants. A few of the gentry in the neighborhood subscribed to buy them a cow, and allow them a weekly stipend until they were able to work; but this protection only drew fresh attacks of violence from the misguided men who had vowed his destruction, as Mahoney was now looked upon as the *protégé* of the anti-repealers; and each act of aggression committed on him was meant as an attack on the persons who were charitably relieving his wants. Threatening notices were found nailed on his door; his humble friends and neighbors were warned not to assist him or enter his house; and a very few days saw the cow given to him sacrificed, like the former, to the brutal rage of the vindictive rabble, leaving the poor couple nearly heart-broken by such a fearful system of persecution.

Luckily for the poor Mahoneys, the family of Springmount arrived at this critical period, and Mr. Desmond having heard of the tyranny exercised by the lawless depredators over this unhappy couple, determined to protect them. Grace Cassidy, who had never deserted them, in defiance of all threats, proceeded to their cottage the morning after the visit of the ladies from Springmount, taking with her, according to her usual custom, a basket of provisions. Even since the last visit, only four days before, fresh depredations had been committed, and the air of misery and desolation this once cheerful spot wore was painful to witness. The broken paling of the garden lay scattered around, dead flowers and plants were prostrate on the earth they lately decked, and the effluvia of putrified vegetables tainted the air. The windows were all broken, the parasitical plants that nearly covered the cottage torn down, and drooping their withered leaves in death."

"And this," thought Grace, "is the work of the friends of Ireland, the Repealers, who are ever to be traced by the ruin and destruction that marks their path. What will be the next act of oppression and cruelty to this unhappy couple, to whom they have left nothing but a little life? Is there no law to save us from such terrible scourges? Och! if the humane English knew only half what the quiet and decent people are exposed to, they would make some effort to save us."

Grace entered the cottage, and was shocked at the scene that presented itself to her. The poor couple were sitting on the floor, with disease preying on their

exhausted frames, every article of their furniture broken in pieces and strewing the floor, and all their provisions trampled under foot. The same miscreants who had hitherto been persecuting them had broken into their cottage the night before, and completed this work of destruction by breaking and smashing every thing in the house; Mary was half dead with fright, having expected every moment, during the stay of the Repealers, to see her husband and child massacred; for it had been debated whether he should be killed or not, when her passionate entreaties to spare his life had touched even their obdurate hearts, and they departed, leaving the wretched couple exhausted with suffering, their household goods shivered at their feet, and their only child nearly in convulsions from excessive terror.

Grace, like a ministering angel, tried to comfort and assist them, she made them partake of some of the provisions she had brought, and cheered them by the intelligence of the arrival of the dear good ould master, and all his family, at Springmount, who would soon help and save them.

While she was yet holding out this hope to her poor friends, Mr. Desmond and Colonel Forrester, who had heard of the attack on the Mahoneys the night before, came to visit the cottage, and amply realised Grace's promises; for, no sooner had they witnessed the destruction around, than Mr. Desmond declared he would remove the Mahoneys to Springmount, where they should have the protection of his own roof, and left the family overpowered by their gratitude, while he returned to send a conveyance for their removal.

"I well knew he would," said Grace, "for sure, there's not his match in the world for goodness; and now, dear friends, you may look on your troubles as being over, when once you are lodged under his happy roof. Sure, Mary, you must let me make you a little dacent to meet the ladies; and you too, dear cousin, pray tidy yourself a bit: though weak enough you are, my poor boy, good nourishing food, a good bed, and an aisy mind, will, with the blessing of God, soon set you and Mary right; and as for the dear child, you'll see how soon he'll get well."

"Och! Grace, ma-vourneen, it's yourself that always has words of comfort, and pleasant tones to spake 'em in, and looks of kindness, too, said Mary; "may you never require the services that you have so often rendered me! But if you should, och! Grace, it's myself that would be a sister to you, for I feel as if it was the same warm red blood that set both our hearts a beating, and put loving thoughts in 'em. I never, as you know, Grace asthore, had the blessing of a sister, and you are in the same state; often and often have I grieved for it, for sure one seems to be incomplete, and to be but half one's self, when one has not the other half in a sister, who has drawn life from the same source, slept on the same pillow, played in infancy the same plays, prayed together to God, and for each other, and grown into womanhood side by side like two roses on one stem. Let us then be as sisters, dear Grace; for much as I have to love in my husband and child, I want to extend my love still wider. Sure God has filled our hearts with affection, and happy are they who have objects to share it from their birth; but us who have not sisters or brothers, the natural links in the chain of love, we must forget 'em for ourselves, and be to each other what Providence has denied to us—sisters."

## CHAPTER LXIV.

"Some fiery fop, with new commission vain,
Who sleeps on brambles till he kills his man,
Some frolic drunkard, reeling from a feast,
Provokes a broil, and stabs you for a jest."

The cold-hearted and calculating Lord Delmore hurried from London, without one feeling of pity towards the wife, even yet a bride, that he was deserting, nay, whom he had plundered of her mother's gift. He recoiled from the remembered instances of her selfishness and frivolity that had come under his notice, as if *he* were free from such defects, instead of being pre-eminent in them, and soiled by actions, in comparison to which the errors of his wife appeared as virtues: thus verifying the observation, that the less goodness we have, the more do we require in others, and the less are we inclined to overlook their deficiencies. No compunctious reflections visited his breast at having marred the happiness of a young and pretty woman; and if any feeling was excited towards her, it was one of distaste.

He pursued his course to Paris with rapidity, anxious to lose the sense of the humiliating exhibition he had made, *vis-a-vis* to White's; and forgetful that one of the advantages derived from our boasted march of intellect is the celerity with which scandal and gossip are conveyed from one ca-

pital to the other. The march of intellect is often confounded with the gallop of frivolity, and may sometimes be called the halt of reason; and if we reflect on the avidity with which personal scandal, private anecdotes, and mysterious innuendoes are sought after and propagated, we can hardly flatter ourselves that the "march of intellect," or "general spread of knowledge," has made us wiser or better.

It is the fashion to decry certain newspapers, and to hold up their editors to reprobation for the personalities in which they indulge. We believe ourselves moral, religious, and good, when we declaim against such publications; but we forget that it is we who give the taste for them, and the editors only administer to our appetites. If the taste existed not, we should have none of the publications alluded to; but we never blame ourselves, being content to blame others.

The notice of Lord Delmore's ruin arrived in Paris in a very few days after himself, and being copied into Galignani's paper, "Le Voleur" and "Figaro," drew on him an attention much less flattering, though more marked, than that which he had hitherto excited in the French capital. He found himself much less *recherché*, though more stared at; and was oftener invited to Le Salon des Etrangers, than to the English Ambassador's. Finding his time hang heavy on his hands, he by degrees accustomed himself to pass much of it at Le Salon, and risked the greater part of the sum so dishonorably acquired at Rouge et Noir, with the general result of such experiments, the loss of it, and with it his temper; a union of no unfrequent occurrence in the life of a gambler.

An impatient, and equivocal ejaculation, instigated by the fate of his last stake, offended a French officer; who, in return, applied an epithet to him that admitted of no doubt of the intention to insult him. Angry words succeeded, and a *rencontre* was arranged for the next morning in the Bois de Boulogne, which terminated in the death of Lord Delmore, who fell pierced through the heart by the ball of his adversary: thus incurring his doom through the means of the theft committed on his wife, as without that money he would not have played at Le Salon, nor have had the quarrel which led to his duel.

Lord and Lady Abberville soon made their appearance at Springmount: the former full of *les derniers* "on dits" of the underlings at the Treasury, which were attempted to be passed off as extracts from private letters from the ruling powers; and the latter "big with the fate" of female reputation, and sending forth insinuations and implications of no doubtful import, had the ears that received them been at all akin to the malicious tongue that uttered them. Her malice was so generally known, that when the mode of wearing bracelets in the form of serpents first came out, Lady Abberville was one of the earliest adopters of it, which gave rise to two lines that were very generally repeated in the circles in which she moved, the individuals composing them, considering that next to the pleasure of hearing an enemy attacked, is that of hearing a friend. The lines were:—

"Of Abberville now you need feel no alarm,
The serpent has fled from her tongue to her arm."

"I have heard to-day from Lady Nottingham," said Lady Abberville, "who writes that Mr. Henry Vernon's daughter is to be married to the Marquis of Tadcaster. What a *mésalliance!* it is really shocking. Such a vulgar family of *parvenus, mais 'Qui sait se faire aimer n' a pas besoin d' aieux;'* and the girl, I must admit, is very handsome, though her *petit nez retroussé* is somewhat objectionable. Lord Durnford, also, is about to be married to some citizeness of credit and renown, and of fortune I'll be sworn; for a man of fashion rarely goes into the city, except to his banker, or to search for some one who will entitle him to have a banker."

"But Lord Durnford is already rich, and can have no temptation to marry," said Mrs. Forrester, "wholly for money."

"*Qui sait, ma chere dame?*" replied Lady Abberville. "Men may have large estates, and green acres, but their is a certain board of green cloth, in the purlieus of St. James's, that has discovered the secret of sweeping them away 'at one fell swoop,' or dismantling them so rapidly, that the wand of enchantment never accomplished a transfer of property with more celerity. It was to this great modern alchemist, that a ruined frequenter of his verdant table asked, in the agony of losing his last stake, 'What! will you not leave me a tree to hang myself upon?' the whole of his woods having disappeared during the season. Now I know that Lord Durnford was a constant frequenter at this transmuter of metals, and therefore I think it probable he has found it convenient to marry a rich wife: besides, I know that few men marry except for money," stealing a spiteful

glance at Colonel Forrester, "and I rejoice that I was an untochered lass, as I could not bear to be married for my fortune, a fear that must always enter into the minds of rich ladies."

The whole party felt the malice of Lady Abberville's insinuation, but it fell harmless on them; and they were more inclined to pity the inherent spitefulness that led her to wound those whom it was her interest to conciliate, than angry at the attempt.

"Of course you have heard of Lord Delmore's extraordinary marriage, and desertion of his wife," resumed Lady Abberville. "His history is a curious one altogether. I was much in his confidence," (looking at Lady Oriel,) "and he has told me some very amusing anecdotes."

The mischief-loving *Cancanniere* was disappointed at seeing Lady Oriel show no symptom of embarrassment at her insinuation, and therefore changed the subject. Lady Oriel had previously seen in the newspapers all the particulars of the marriage, and anticipating the malice of Lady Abberville, had schooled herself to conquer every symptom of uneasiness, should the subject be referred to.

Having exhausted all her scandal, the indefatigable lady returned to the end and aim of all her present speculations—the barrack to be built, and declared that she "had an architect ready to commence the building, as she was sure that, as soon as it should be erected, the government must see the necessity of purchasing it. The country was becoming every day more troubled: without the means of accommodating a large military force it never could be tranquillised; but strange to say, the Marquis of Mona seemed to be ignorant of the actual state of affairs, though she had endeavored to enlighten him. The barrack was the only means of terrifying the lower classes, and civilising the middling; she had made herself thoroughly acquainted with all the intrigues and plots of white-feet, black-feet, agitators, repealers, and conservatives, and knew more of what was going on, and likely to go on, than any magistrate in the country, or all the magistrates put together."

Having finished her tirade she withdrew, much to the relief of the circle at Springmount; and Mr. Desmond observed, that to her might well be applied the remark made by a poet on the gifted Madame de Staël, "that she excelled more in monologue than dialogue, never allowing any one to speak but herself, though," added he, "it is profanation to compare an *intriguante* to a woman of genius."

When Lady Oriel had recovered from the fatigues of her recent journey, Mr. and Mrs. Desmond proposed their making a tour to the Lakes of Killarney; and the party set out, determined to be amused—a determination that we recommend to all parties about to undertake that perilous adventure, a party of pleasure—the progress and termination of which are generally as little pleasurable, as though a spell was cast over the individuals composing it. Such parties in general commence in idleness, and end in ennui, leaving aught but agreeable impressions of the sights seen, or of the persons with whom they have been seen. And why is this? it is because people expect too much, and will not bear with too little. A bad day, or a bad inn, can eclipse the superficial gaiety of individuals tired of themselves, and depending for amusement on external sources; and in the frame of mind or humor such discomforts produce, and the agreeable companions of the day before, agreeable from the exhilarating effects of sunshine and good accommodation, are looked upon as disagreeable and tiresome, because we are conscious of being both ourselves, when we draw the uncharitable conclusion.

The party from Springmount had predetermined to find bad inns an amusing novelty, and bad weather a bearable evil, in their own agreeable society; and, consequently the expedition had little chance of ending like the generality of parties of pleasure. As they travelled with Mr. Desmond's horses, they proceeded not as rapidly as travellers in search of amusement love to do, as it seems to be an understood thing that pleasure and rapidity of movement are inseparable: people gallop through countries they go to examine, and leave them with a confused jumble of ideas, in which scarcely a distinct notion is defined, the recollections being like the trees, hills, and mountains that they flitted by, one succeeding another, and all vague, dreamy, and confused.

They rested the first night at a country inn, and were more amused than disquieted at observing the bustle and agitation their arrival produced.

"Bill, Bill, arrah! where are you, Bill? Can't you run and get the bellows to blow a spark of life into the fire?" said or rather screamed the master of the inn: "Sure the ladies will die of the could any how."

"Is it the bellows you main?" said

Bill, (thrusting his fingers into the uncombed locks of fiery hue that hung in wild disorder over his head,) "sure it has lost it's nose, and it's no use thrying it; sorrow's the breath it will give." And so saying, he knelt, and supplied the place of the bellows with his mouth, until he produced a blaze from the turf that sent forth sparks of light as red as his own locks.

"Run, run for your life, Bill, and see what's in the larder," said the landlord, walking off at the same time to give his instructions.

The ladies had retired to examine the bed-rooms, the windows of which looked into the yard, and saw the indefatigable Bill, aided by a bare-legged girl, in active pursuit of some poultry, whose cries bore witness to their alarm.

"This I suppose," said Lady Oriel, pointing to the yard, "is the larder, and before us is our dinner."

"Them devils of ould cocks is as cunning as a fox," screamed the panting Bill, "they'll never be caught, thry the ould hen, Biddy, she's not so cute, say something civil to her, and she'll come to you."

"Chick, chick," said Biddy, with her most insinuating smile. But smiles were vain; the ould hen was as wary as her male friends, and nothing remained but for Bill to hunt them, and pelt them down with stones, hitting with a dexterity that surprised the ladies, each stone bringing down a wounded bird.

"Arrah! stop, Bill, are you mad, you fool of the world?" screamed Biddy, "sure you were only to kill two, and there you've kill'd four."

"I've a mind to kill every mother's soul of 'em," said Bill, "for giving me all this botheration, instead of letting themselves be caught quietly, at once, when they know they must be caught at last."

The wounded birds were seized, their fluttering pinions broken, and their heads wrung by Bill, who desired Biddy to run into the lough, and pull him out two of them ducks.

"Can't you do it yourself, Bill?" said the gentle Biddy, "and bad manners to you."

"Arrah! how can I, woman," says he, now that I've got my stockings on? Go in, Biddy agrah, and I'll give you a glass to warm you."

"Here goes," said Biddy, tucking up her garments as high as decency would permit, and rushing into the green slimy pool, designated as the lough by Bill, in which sundry ducks were enjoying their verdant bath, which, as Bill often observed, was meat, drink, and washing to them. She seized a struggling duck in one hand, and placing it under her arm, whence it sent streams of liquid mud over her garments, she grasped another, whose screams and struggles seemed to excite her anger, instead of moving her pity, as she said, "Well, divil mend your taypots, now I have ye in spite of ye're teeth, and the English lords and ladies will know what ye're made of before ye're two hours oulder."

"Success to you, Biddy agrah," cried Bill. "Sure yourself is the girl for bringing 'em to raison."

Mrs. Forrester made the gentlemen laugh when she attempted a description of the scene she had witnessed; and the ladies confessed, that not even their disgust at the cruelty the feathered tribe had suffered could subdue the laughter that Bill and Biddy had excited.

The dinner was served in a much shorter time than could have been expected, and the quantity could not have been blamed, except in its excess, whatever might be said of the quality. A salted shoulder of mutton boiled, and called corn mutton, served up with cabbage, graced the top of the board; a piece of roast-beef confronted it at the bottom, two broiled ducks smothered in onions flanked one side, and a *spatch* cock, which means a broiled fowl, faced it; the interstices of the table being filled with potatoes and pickles that seemed to have "fallen into the sear and yellow leaf."

Bill seemed as astonished as grieved that neither the ducks nor fowls were touched, and could not resist recommending them as being elegant and mighty tinder, an observation that called smiles to the faces of all the party.

Hearing Lord Oriel's remark to Mrs. Desmond that the beef was more highly flavored in Ireland than in England, but much less fat, Bill, with a bow and a pull of one of his elfin locks, begged their lordships' pardon, but the raison that bit of beef on the table was so *lane* was, that it was from a piper's cow, who had danced away all her fat.

The second course consisted of the three remaining slaughtered fowls, fried eggs and bacon, buttered greens, roast potatoes, apple-dumplings, and cream custards; and again Bill strenuously reccommended the

fowls—"Sure, if they'd only taste 'em, they'd find 'em beautiful; there wasn't finer in all Ireland, and a body might travel from Cork to Dublin and not meet with their match any how."

Bill had a motive for urging the guests to demolish the fowls, which was, that he had been scolded by the host and hostess for killing four instead of two, and was afraid of another lecture if they returned untouched. "Sure, my lords, I'm greatly afeard yourselves and the ladies, saving their presence, aren't quite continted with the dinner, for ye have eat so little."

Bill was re-assured by the commendations bestowed on the repast; and his appetite being excited by the dainties before him, he mentally promised himself to partake a portion before they were restored to the pantry of the hostess. On removing them, aided by the active Biddy, he dissected, or rather tore the limbs from the ducks and fowls; and having piled a pyramid of wings and legs of ducks and fowls on a plate, covered with onion-sauce, he concealed it, *pour le moment*, in the place next at hand, which happened to be the bed-room designed for Lady Oriel; and the savory mess was put under her ladyship's bed, breathing odors the least likely to charm a fine lady, though peculiarly attractive to the olfactory nerves of Bill and his friend Biddy.

"By the powers, Biddy my girl," said Bill, "we'll have an eligant supper when they're all gone to their beds! and I'll just lave the plate under the bed, till we've an opportunity of slipping it safe into some hole or corner. But the divil's in the misthriss, she's always poking her nose everywhere, and smells the taste of a rat, if one has only got a morsel hid in a corner; sure many's the comfortable bit and sup I'd share with you, Biddy my dear, but that I've no place to hide 'em, and am obliged to swallow 'em up, at the risk of choking myself, bekase the ould woman is always after my heels."

When Bill descended into the kitchen with only the carcases of the ducks and fowls, the hostess screamed out, "Well, if this does not bait out Ban and Banagher! ten wings and ten legs all gone, and nothing left but the poor bodies of three fowls and two ducks! Talk of aiting, sure it's them English lords and ladies that have the stomachs, and could ait twice as much as the Irish gentry! Faith they must be charged double price to make up for it; and if they dhrink as much as they ait, they'll have a purty long bill to pay."

"Indeed then, misthriss, you're right enough, they're the very divils for swallowing—wing after wing, and leg after leg disappeared; sure I thought they'd never stop, they kept playing away at such a rate!"

While Bill was speaking, Biddy entered with the plates, on which were the fragments of the small morsels of beef and mutton, the only part of the dinner touched by the guests. The hostess looked over the plates, and then turning to Bill with one of her most fiery glances, "Arrah, you tief of the world! you gormandising rogue! did the English lords and ladies swallow the bones as well as the flesh of my elegant wings and legs?"

"Faith and they picked 'em clane," said Bill, "and threw 'em in the fire; that's what they did."

"I'll never believe you, ye rogue of the the world!" cried the enraged hostess; "sure such genteel company would never do the like; and if they did wouldn't I smell it all over the house?"

At this moment the valet-de-chambre of Lord Oriel descended, followed by a footman bearing the pyramidally piled plate, which he placed on the table; and the valet angrily complained that her ladyship's room had been infected with the abominable smell of the onions, and that having tried to discover whence the smell came, Mrs. Marsden, her ladyship's femme-de-chambre, had found the plate hid under her ladyship's bed, and was now burning *eau a brule* to get rid of the dreadful odor.

The cheek of Bill assumed a crimson tint, one shade darker than his locks, he saw that denial was vain, and was stupified by the detection of his guilt; Biddy disappeared, and the hostess having thanked my lord's body-servant, as she called him, for causing the elegant wings and legs to be restored to her, turned to the culprit, and shaking her head at him, said, "No wonder, you carroty-headed rogue, you're so fat and plump, when this is the way you're robbing, and pilfering, and backbiting grand company, by making me believe they're aiting me out of house and home; no wonder you kill four fowls, you cruel-hearted baist, instead of two, when it's all to put into your own hungry mouth; I've long suspected you, and looked after you sharply, but now you're found out, and here" (holding up the plate) "are the bones that you said the grand company picked so clane and threw them into the fire. Sure, if they knew that you wanted to make 'em pass for porpoises and giants

in regard to aiting, what would they say to you? If you had stolen the beef or mutton, I wouldn't blame you so much, but my elegant ducks and fowls, I'll never forgive you."

The inn was so small, and the partitions so thin, and the landlady's voice so loud, that all her harangue had been overheard by the party from Springmount, who were not a little amused at this characteristic scene of Irish manners; and when Bill came up with tea, looking ashamed and afraid they could hardly conceal their laughter.

"How odd!" said Lord Oriel, "that the landlady should make such a distinction in theft, as to be furious at his stealing poultry, and to say that, had he taken the beef or mutton, she would not have blamed him. Henceforth Bill will conclude that beef and mutton may be stolen with impunity, and that poultry alone is forbidden. Strange people! how difficult it is for strangers to understand them."

Arrived at Killarney, they found the principal inn nearly filled by visitors, and had to take up their abode in the less frequented one, a circumstance which, though offering worse accommodation, promised to afford them a better opportunity of judging of the national character in its native garb, than in the Anglicised hotel, where all was, or affected to be, *a l'Anglaise*, with bowing, curtseying, and obsequious host and hostess, mincing waiters, and smirking housemaids.

The whole party were enchanted with the scene, which far surpassed all their expectations. The magnificent woods, fine mountains, and admirable lakes spread out like vast mirrors reflecting them; and above all, the arbutus, with its flowers and fruit, which here flourishes so luxuriantly, called forth their warmest admiration. Lady Oriel contrasted her present position and feelings with the painful ones that weighed down her spirits, when, a year before, she visited the Lakes of Cumberland, tête-à-tête with her husband, shrinking from contact with former acquaintances, lest she should encounter a mortification inflicted on her by the heartless Lady Abberville.

Supported now by the presence of two ladies who were considered models of every female virtue, her husband nearly restored to his former peace of mind and confidence, how much had she to be grateful for, and with what true humility did she return thanks to that All-merciful Power that had vouchsafed to save her from the consequences of her imprudence!

The day after their arrival at Killarney, Colonel Forrester encountered the Marquis of Tadcaster, who had arrived from England a few days before with his wife, on a tour through the south of Ireland. He informed Colonel Forrester of the death of Lord Delmore, and the circumstances that led to it; and while commenting on the profligacy and dishonor which marked the conduct of Lord Delmore up to the last moment of his life, he stated the good feeling and good sense with which Lady Delmore had conducted herself under such very trying circumstances, and added, that though her worthless husband neither had made, nor intended to make a provision for her, yet by the settlements made by his father, she now found herself in possession of a suitable jointure, which his creditors could not touch, but of which she resigned immediately three parts to the creditors, sorely against the advice and wishes of her father.

"My excellent father-in-law and her uncle," said Lord Tadcaster, "was so gratified by the whole of her conduct, that he has settled ten thousand pounds on her, so that she is now independent of her selfish father; but she continues to live under his roof for the sake of being near her amiable mother, to whom she devotes all her time and attention."

Lord Tadcaster asked permission to present his wife to the ladies, and Colonel Forrester returned to inform Lady Oriel of the death of Lord Delmore, to prevent her betraying any emotion on hearing it publicly announced.

When the whole of his conduct was laid open to her by her brother, how did she shudder at the idea that this was the man for whom she had once entertained sentiments of good will and friendship, and towards whom she considered her husband had been unjust! "How could I have been so deceived?" asked she of herself. And this question led to a train of reflection, that ended by her consciousness that it was vanity, and the gratification his flattery and attentions afforded to that vanity, which had blinded her to the defects of this unprincipled man.

How many of the finest qualities are eclipsed by this one passion, which, like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest; and how many sacrifices of principle, honor, and happiness, are daily offered up at its shrine! If there be a passion,

which more than all others leads its victim into danger, it is vanity; and against its indulgence every effort should be made in early youth, ere it has found its unfailing reward, vexation of spirit, shame and ridicule.

Lady Oriel, Mrs. Desmond, and Mrs. Forrester, were so much pleased with the Marchioness of Tadcaster, that they invited her and her lord to join their party, and stay some time with them at Springmount—a proposal that was cheerfully accepted; and having seen all that the romantic and beautiful country round Killarney could boast, they set out on their return to Springmount, highly gratified by all that they had seen.

At this period it was announced that Lady Oriel was soon likely to increase her family; intelligence which delighted her husband, and afforded the utmost gratification to her friends. Lord Oriel had long sighed for this addition to his happiness, as it had been a source of pain to him to think that at his decease his ancient title would become extinct, and his fortune pass into other hands.

The death of Lord Delmore seemed to remove the last trace of Lord Oriel's uneasiness. That heartless man could now no longer cross their path, to awaken dormant retrospections and forgotten scandal; and seeing his wife beloved and respected by all around her, he ceased to remember that she had ever been exposed to slander; or recollected it only to rejoice that she had recovered the place in society, to which her many virtues so fully entitled her.

The persecution that Patrick Mahoney experienced from the Repealers disgusted Jim Cassidy more with them than all the representations of his wife and friends. He declared he never would attend another meeting, and that henceforth he would stand aloof from them—a declaration which filled the heart of poor Grace with joy and thankfulness.

"Och! Jim dear, this was all that was wanting to my happiness," said Grace, "and at what a blessed moment does it come! Sure, it was wrong of me, and unloving too, to doubt you after all I've seen of your good sense lately, but somehow or other I was afraid the speeches, and the cunning way them people have to make one believe black was white, might get you back into their hands, and sure that would have been the death of me, and not only of me, but one more precious, dear Jim, for I'm in the way to be a mother."

"Then God be thanked, my own Grace," said Jim, embracing her, "and you'll see I'll never vex or bother you any more. Och! you rouge," kissing her again, "why didn't you tell me before? Sure you ought to know how glad it would make me. I hope, Grace a-vourneen, the child will be like you, for then I'll love it twice as well, as I know it will be a blessing."

A look of tenderness unutterable repaid Jim's affectionate declaration; and he vowed henceforth to be the best boy in the parish, and save every halfpenny he could, now that he was to be a father.

"I never tould you, Grace, how often I was vexed at our not having a child," said Jim, "bekase I thought you might take it ill; but sure it's a bitter thing to think that a couple will be growing ould, with no one to love, no one to save for, and no one to shed a tear for 'em, when God takes 'em to himself. But now all this fear is over, and I'll be as happy a father as any other poor man in the country."

Trouble ever follows quickly on the footsteps of joy. The day after the scene we have described, Jim Cassidy was torn from the arms of his distracted wife, and lodged a prisoner in the same gaol where he had formerly visited his friend Patrick Mahoney. His former connection with the disaffected and lawless men in his neighborhood had rendered him an object of suspicion to the police, and the recent acts of violence in the vicinity of Cologan had awakened their vigilance, and led to the arrest of many who were less innocent of the offence with which they stood charged, than was Jim Cassidy.

Unfortunately for Grace, her husband's arrest took place during the absence of the family of Springmount at the Lakes of Killarney, and she suffered all the anxiety and alarm such a circumstance was likely to produce until they returned. She had gone to Jim every day, and stayed with him in prison until the gates were closed, and all visitors excluded. The first evening, this separation was a dreadful trial to them both; and poor Jim wept like a child when the turnkey led Grace to the door and locked the heavy chain that secured it. But she conquered her own grief to administer comfort to his; and smiling through her tears, said, "Well, dear Jim, sure we're like two foolish children, crying because we are separated for a night, when, to-morrow, the moment the doors are opened, I'll be here to stay with you all

the day, and every day, till the dear master comes back, when you may be sure he'll soon open those iron gates, and send you home with me; and we'll both smile at all the troubles that's now frightening us, and making us cry."

Grace's situation increased the grief and anxiety of Jim; he trembled lest her alarm might endanger her safety, and reproached himself bitterly for ever having laid himself open to suspicion by his former imprudence. Patrick and Mary Mahoney, though both ill and suffering, had themselves conveyed in a car to the prison to comfort their friends, and it was a touching scene to behold the four mingling their tears together, but the women smiling even through theirs to comfort their husbands.

No sooner had Mr. Desmond returned to Springmount than he procured the release of Jim Cassidy, who from that moment became an object of suspicion and dislike to his former associates. He was pointed out as an informer—a term of reproach the most ignominious that can be applied in Ireland, and the most likely to draw down vengeance on the unhappy person who is the object of it. Not all Grace's confidence in the goodness and power of Mr. Desmond could tranquillise her mind for the future safety of her husband, and she trembled every time he left her presence.

## CHAPTER LXV.

"Oh! could I worship aught beneath the skies
That ear h hath seen or fancy can devise,
Thine altar, sacred Liberty, should stand,
Built by no mercenary vulgar hand,
With fragrant turf and flowers as wild and fair
As ever dress'd a bank or scented summer air."

Jim Cassidy had only been a few days released from prison, when Larry M'Swigger came into his house one evening, and with evident symptoms of alarm announced that he had stolen away from the Cat and Bagpipes to inform them that the disaffected faction assembled there, were violent in their threats against Cassidy, and that he feared they would put them into execution. "They say you are an informer, a turncoat, a spy, in the pay of Mr. Desmond, and his Sassenach son-in-law, and that they will have vengeance on you and Patrick Mahoney. I've often seen 'em mad and foolish; but this time they bait out Ban and Banagher, and Ballinisloe into the bargain," said Larry, "for they have the very devil in their heads, ay, be my troth, and in their hearts too, and God only knows where they will stop."

"I'll go to the Cat and Bagpipes this very minute," said Jim Cassidy, "and confront 'em; for no man shall say that I'm a turncoat, a spy, or an informer;" and the honest blood mounted to the face of the indignant man.

Grace seized him by the coat, and with an appealing look and a face pale as marble entreated him not to venture amongst them. "They are all intoxicated," added she, "and incapable of listening to reason; go not near them, Jim dear, but if you wish to clear yourself of their vile charges, wait 'till they are sober, and seek them with one or two quiet steady friends."

"Sure I'll go with him myself," said Larry, "and be spokesman, and the schoolmaster won't refuse, I'm sure, to give 'em some more of his Greek and Latin to help him out of the scrape; but at this present moment they are too tipsy and violent to listen even to the Agitator himself if he was on the spot."

Jim Cassidy yielded to the entreaties of his wife, and Larry began to relate the throubles, as he called them, that were disturbing the neighboring counties. "Faith, things get worse and worse every day," said he, "and the run on the banks has given the finishing blow to the poor people. The cattle and pigs are driven back from the fairs unsold, not a bill will be discounted, if it was signed by the Lord Leftenant himself; and them that are suffering from all this, haven't the sense to see that they have brought it on themselves, but get more desperate in their folly. If you heard the wicked threat'nings of the people at the Cat and Bagpipes; they swore they'd burn the house over the heads of Mr. Desmond and his family, and set fire to his woods!"

"Och! Larry dear," said Grace, "do you think they are serious in this? and och! why didn't you tell us before? Let us go, Jim, without losing a moment, and put the family on their guard."

"There's no danger this night any way, Mistress Cassidy," said Larry; "of that, I promise you, for they have not sufficient men to undertake an attack on Springmount, but that they intend such a measure I have not the least doubt, and think Mr. Desmond ought to be informed of it tomorrow. Little, he that has thrown the spark of fire among these mad and wicked people, imagines the mischief he has

caused, and if he had heard what I did to-night, he'd tremble to think what he has done; but gentlemen little know of what different stuff the minds of the poor ignorant people are made, and that though it's aisy enough to drive 'em mad, it's no aisy thing to bring 'em back to their raison; they are for all the world like the elephants that Dick Mulligan tould me they have in Ingee in their battles, who often turn round and thrample on those that drove 'em on, doing more harm to their friends than their enemies. Sure they may say what they will, but I'll never believe but what it gives many a heart-ache to the laider of the Repalers, to see and hear the cruel murders and wicked things they do; but he can't stop 'em, though he can make 'em do any thing else. I've seen him, and know him, and believe him to be a humane man, for God never gave the gift of fine thoughts and words to a narrow or a cruel heart; therefore I wish he was now on the spot to listen to the mischief that's plotting, and to see, that while he is thinking of liberty as a fine, grand, and elegant thing, that's to bring blessings, and peace and plenty, on poor ould Ireland, but to get which some mischief and danger must be gone through, they are thinking of it as a something that will give every idle fellow amongst 'em the power of plundering the rich, living without work, and having no laws, and that the mischief incurred to gain it, is only a foretaste of that they will have to keep it. This is the difference between a gentleman's view of liberty, and the view of a poor ignorant man. Their laider knows this, but he knows it would be useless to attempt making them feel as he does, and therefore tries to use them as means of carrying his point, hoping to be able to correct them after he has succeeded, which he has little chance of."

While Larry was yet talking, shouts and yells, from a distance, struck on the ears of his auditors. "They come, they come," cried Larry, "and if you wish to save your lives, let us fly from the house."

A look at Grace, and the recollection of her situation, decided Jim to adopt the advice of Larry, and snatching up a cloak, which he threw over her shoulders, the two men hurried the trembling Grace through the back door of the cottage, and by a short cut across the fields that led to Springmount; which they had hardly reached, when they saw a column of fire ascend the air, and heard the shouts of triumph of the infuriated rabble, as the flames spread wider and wider, embracing the paling and trees close to the cottage.

Tears burst in torrents from Grace, as she beheld her cottage, the quiet, happy home where she had passed such blissful days, enveloped by the lurid blaze, and she felt as if her happiness was destroyed with the home that witnessed it.

"Och! Jim dear," sobbed the poor woman, "our beautiful cottage, and all the nice furniture that I was so proud of; our garden and lovely flowers, all—all destroyed! And to think that in a few hours no trace will remain of all that was so fair and flourishing an hour ago—och! it's too cruel!" and she wept in agony on the shoulder of her husband.

Jim tried to console her, and observed how happy it was that they had fled, for that otherwise their lives would have fallen a sacrifice to the wrath of the incendiaries. "We're safe and together, Grace a-vourneen," said Jim; "and the same good friend that provided us with the cottage, can give us another; so don't be unhappy, and you'll see, Grace, you'll never have any fretting in the new house, as you had in the ould, on account of my folly."

They gained entrance at Springmount, and Mr. Desmond being informed of their arrival, and the cause that led to it, summoned Colonel Forrester and Lords Oriel and Tadcaster to consult on the best measures to pursue. After much consulation, it was agreed that to go out and meet the rabble, now that the mischief they had intended was perpetrated, would be unavailing; but it was decided that the park-gates and lodges should be guarded by armed men for the night, each of the noblemen, and Mr. Desmond, and Colonel Forrester, presiding at the four gates: and Mr. Desmond wrote off to Dublin Castle an account of the whole transaction.

Lady Oriel and the Marchioness of Tadcaster were exceedingly alarmed at the danger to which they fancied their liege lords exposed; but Mrs. Desmond and Mrs. Forrester, who knew Ireland better, tranquillised their minds by the assurance that the passionate effervescence of the insurgents would evaporate with the fire they had kindled, and that when they had exhausted their fury, they would return to their homes. The courage of the mother and daughter, as displayed in the confidence with which they saw their husbands depart for their separate guard stations, was even more convincing than their words; but the English ladies, while submitting to the emergency that required

such a sacrifice of comfort on the part of their husbands, made elaborate comparisons between the comforts of England and Ireland, which satisfactorily convinced themselves and those who heard them that a residence in Ireland was like Rochefoucault's opinion of marriage,—"sometimes convenient, but never delightful."

The ladies sent for Grace Cassidy, that they might gain confidence from her unsophisticated account of what she had witnessed; but the pale face, curved brow, and *l'air abattu* of Grace, were little calculated to reassure them.

"How good you must be, my dear Mrs. Desmond," said Lady Oriel, "to live among a set of people on whose stability of opinion you cannot calculate for twenty-four hours. To-day they love you; to-morrow they loathe you; and the change arises not in what they see, or know, but in the insidious dictate of some rancorous demagogue."

"Och, my Lady," observed Grace, who overheard the observation, "do not hate and condemn us, although appearances are against us. The same people, who have laid in ashes my happy home, would sacrifice days and nights to repair the mischief they have done, when once raison comes back to 'em; I hate their actions when they are wicked, but I cannot hate *them*, for I know they act before they reflect. Sure it is difficult for an English lady to understand this, and to make allowance for 'em. But if you knew, my lady, what good there's in their hearts, you'd forgive the mischief that's in their heads. I would not be afraid to go before five hundred of 'em, if my husband was not exposed to their fury, for they are tender-hearted, though their heads are so fiery; and when they see a weak woman before 'em, they will listen to her with more respect than to a regiment, ay, my lady, than to ten regiments; but I'm a coward for my husband, and tremble for him, when I'd disdain to fear for myself."

"How sorry I am, my good Mrs. Cassidy," said Lady Oriel, "that your neat cottage is destroyed! It was only yesterday that I was telling Lady Tadcaster how nice it was, and we intended going to see you to-morrow."

"Sure your ladyship was good and kind, to think of such poor people as us, and 'twas an honor we can't forget; but I'm consoled for our loss when I think that this spite on the part of the Repalers, widens the breach more than ever between them and my husband, and proves his innocence of the charges brought against him of being one of them. No blessing comes without its price, and I bow with thankfulness to the will of God, happy that I have preserved by husband safe from all the dangers that threatened him."

When Grace retired, the two English ladies dwelt with warm commendation on her beauty and simple purity of character, and agreed, that Grace Cassidy and Mary Mahoney were as original as they were amiable, and of a more elevated nature than the female peasantry in England; commendations that were highly flattering to Mrs. Forrester, who was so partial to her *protegées*. When morning dawned, the gentlemen returned to their wives, and despatches were sent off to the neighboring towns, to inform the commanding officers of the act of violence of the night before. After breakfast, they all proceeded to the still burning ruins of the lately neat and picturesque cottage; where they found Jim and Grace Cassidy weeping over the destruction of their household goods, and carefully collecting fragments of the destroyed articles of predilection as *souvenirs* for the future. Mr. Desmond assured them, that they should have a cottage even more convenient and pretty than the one they deplored, and supplied with every article suited to their comfort; and Grace, while thanking and blessing him, in the honest warmth of her heart, only prayed that their new residence might look on the river and the mountains, for somehow she had got so used to them, she could not be happy without 'em. This request Mr. Desmond kindly promised should be attended to; and Grace and Jim returned to Springmount with lighter hearts and more contented minds.

## CHAPTER LXVI.

"Now for our Irish wars;
We must supplant those rough, rug-headed kerns,
Which live like venom, where no venom else,
But only they, have privilege to live."

The destruction of the house and property of ihe Cassidys appalled the peaceable part of the inhabitants of Cologan, and excited the turbulent to still greater violence. Notices and threatening letters were posted up at every side, and the Mahoneys and Cassidys were denounced, and those who harbored or protected them menaced with vengeance. Troops were sent

from Waterford to preserve the peace, and Mr. Desmond called a meeting of the magistrates, to take into consideration the most effectual method of quelling the spirit of insubordination that raged around him. A copy of the resolutions of the magistrates was sent to the Cat and Bagpipes, and, instead of producing the desired effect, only increased their turbulence and disaffection.

"It is now coming to the point," said Rattling Bill; "we must conquer them, or they will conquer us: once rid of ould Desmond, and his English faction, we shall have it all our own way; and sure the best way to be rid of him is to burn Springmount. Are we to let him take up those turncoats, spies and informers, the Mahoneys and Cassidys, as if he protected 'em purposely to spite us? No, let us make short work of it, and burn the house, and all that's in it, to ashes."

"But what will our laider say to it, he that sets his face against killing and burning?" said Gavin.

"No matter what he says to it," replied Rattling Bill; "Onc't the job is done, it will be no use his preaching to us after. Besides, I don't see why, if we are to agitate, and kick up a row to please and serve his turn, we are not to kick up a row sometimes to please ourselves; so I'm all for making a bonfire of Springmount."

"Yes," said another, "and as we are about it, let us burn the new barracks that ould mischievous woman Lady Abberville is building."

"Ay, and her house into the bargain," said Bill; "for she's a rael bad one, that runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds."

It was agreed that these misguided men should assemble at night on a certain spot; first proceed to Lord Abberville's, to begin the work of destruction, and then set fire to Springmount: and all this deliberate villany was resolved without a feeling of compunction in themselves, or pity for those they had doomed to death.

"Now that we've slept on it," said Rattling Bill, "I'm glad that Grace Cassidy escaped last night, though I'd have been glad her shilly-shally husband had been broiled on his own hearth, as all turncoats and informers deserve to be. But she's a decent woman, and a purty woman, ay, and a modest woman too, and 'twould be a pity to kill her. When I went home and got to bed, the fumes of the whisky in my brain, and the recollection of the crackling flames and smoke in my memory, sure I had a quare dream: I dreamt we were all around the burning house, preventing the inhabitants from getting out of it, when the roof fell in, and I saw Grace Cassidy rise out of the smouldering ruins and float in the air, with bright wings to her shoulders, and a glory round her head. Grace has always a purty smile, just as if she smiled to please others more than herself; for it's melancholy like, though it's so sweet. But in my dream it was ten times sweeter, and she said, 'Och! boys, boys! you'd destroy me, but I'd save you! Turn from your evil courses, and repent, and I'll be your guardian angel!' Sure with that she smiled again, and waved her wings, and a perfume finer than the finest flowers filled the air, and music, the softest and grandest too that ever I heard, came by on the wind, and I awoke—and awoke to think with horror and trembling, that she was burned. I've seen blood shed, more than I ought to see. God forgive me! But if you believe me, the thoughts of this innocent creature, destroyed on her own hearth, and by her own neighbors, shocked me more than all I've ever seen; and the big drops of perspiration burst from my forehead, and I seemed to hear her voice in every breeze. When I got up, and was tould she was safe at Springmount, I hugged the person that tould me, and I'm determined now that a hair of Grace Cassidy's head shall not be harmed: so mind, boys, that every mother's soul of you keep a sharp look out for Grace, that no mischief comes to her, happen what will; for my dream wasn't sent me for nothing; and as long as she's safe, I've a notion, as the dream said, that she'll be our guardian angel."

"Well, who ever expected to hear Rattling Bill minding dreams like an ould woman?" said Gavin; "sure nothing will surprise me after that!"

"I would not advise you to be after making comparisons about me," said Bill, warmly; "if I mind dreams, it is bekase I know that in sleep we're more under the influence of God, than when we're awake; for our evil passions are not tormenting us; and he that dare doubt my courage, or compare me to an ould woman, should not live an hour after."

"You mistake me, Bill," said Gavin, "I'm no such fool; sure I might as well doubt the daylight as doubt your courage; so shake hands, my boy."

"There's many a man here," said old Tim Rafferty, "that's as brave as Bill, no disparagement to him neither, that has had

dreams and warnings, and those are fools who slight 'em; so I'm for following Bill's advice, and not hurting a hair in Grace Cassidy's head. But let us not attack Springmount, unless we have a sufficient force, for them English lords and their servants, with the Curnel, and the servants of the house, make a great body of men."

"I'm for letting the whole of 'em escape," said Rattling Bill, "and merely burning the house; for then we'll get rid of 'em altogether without bloodshed."

"Och! sure if it's only the bloodshed you dislike," said Gavin, with a fiend-like smile, "there'll be none of that, when they'll be burned instead of being kilt."

"You're always for the killing, Gavin," said Bill, "more shame for you; but in this case we'll be guided by the votes of all the party when we assemble together."

The family at Springmount and their guests, unmindful of the danger that threatened them, were consulting on the best mode of allaying the irritation in the neighborhood, which the protection afforded to the Mahoneys and Cassidys had so powerfully excited. Lord Tadcaster offered to give the Mahoneys an asylum in England by appointing the husband gatekeeper to one of the entrances to his park, and Lord and Lady Oriel declared they would establish the Cassidys at Oriel Park.

"This willingness to oblige is very amiable," said Mr. Desmond; "but recollect if we accept your proposals it will have the appearance of yielding to the system of intimidation these misguided men have been so long aiming to establish."

"But, dear Mr. Desmond," said Lady Oriel, "even an apparent concession is better than risking the lives of the two poor families, and exposing yourself to the resentful fury of the people."

"Let us wait a few days before we decide on any thing," said Mr. Desmond, "as I am in hopes the presence of the military will deter the ill-disposed from any violent measures."

While they were yet consulting, Lady Abberville was announced, and entered the library with all the bustling importance that marked her movements. After the customary salutations, she began, "*Eh bien, Messieurs et Mesdames*, will you now acknowledge that the country is in a state of open rebellion? I have been telling the government so for the last two years; but they are so obstinate that they will believe nothing till the mischief arrives. I know, Mr. Desmond, that you have considered me as an alarmist, but the events of the last few days prove that I have been right, and you wrong. All this comes from not having barracks; I always said what the inevitable consequences must be, but I must say I have been very ill supported by the gentry in my neighborhood," (looking spitefully at Mr. Desmond and Colonel Forrester,) "but now they are attacked in their own houses, they must open their eyes to the necessity of keeping up a sufficient military force on the spot, which cannot be done without barracks. Since I saw you, I have advanced rapidly with my building, the masons have gone on surprisingly, the barrack is now two stories high; I've been almost continually on the spot, and have been scarcely an hour off my horse; the fatigue has been overpowering, but when the country is in danger it is the duty of every one to exert himself, and I know this barrack will be the saving of it, for *bongré mulgré*, the government must buy it. Lord Abberville has written an official account of all the recent transactions to the Premier, for the Viceroy seems so absurdly incredulous, that it is useless writing to him; and this morning, on hearing that your house had been attacked last night, we sent off a detailed statement, as we considered it the duty of Lord Abberville to send the first account."

"You have been somewhat premature," said Mr. Desmond, "for my house has *not* been attacked, as my friends Lord Tadcaster and Oriel can certify."

"Well, that is very extraordinary," said Lady Abberville, with angry warmth, "as we were positively assured it had been. But if it has not, it will be, I dare say, which is *a-peu-pres la meme chose*, for my information is in general too correct to admit of my doubting it; so *prenez garde, mes amis*, and don't count on your popularity, for I assure you, this is not the moment to remain quiet, when danger is at your door. I must be off to look how my barrack is going on, for the masons idle if I am not looking at them; I make them work extra hours, which keeps them out of harm's way, and I hope a few weeks will soon finish the building. My stupid steward has been trying to persuade me that it will not be fit for occupation for some months, but this is all nonsense; I shall have it plastered and white-washed the moment the walls are run up, and shall certainly advise its being filled with soldiers as soon after as possible; and you, my dear Mr. Desmond, must assist my project with the

government. Adieu, adieu, *mes amis;*" and away went the intriguante.

## CHAPTER LXVII.

"In thy fair brow there's such a legend writ
Of chastity, as blinds the adult'rous eye;
Not the mountain's ice,
Congeal'd to crystal, is so frosty chaste
As thy victorious soul, which conquers man,
And man's proud tyrant, passion."

Lords Tadcaster and Oriel looked at each other with astonishment, when they heard the tirade of Lady Abberville; and when she had withdrawn, they mutually congratulated each other, that England was free from such women.

"What a nuisance she must be in a neighborhood!" said Lord Oriel to Mr. Desmond: "with all that extraordinary activity, mental and personal, that she possesses, turned to one account, selfish aggrandisement, I cannot fancy a more disagreeable *voisine;* then her effrontery is so glaring, her want of veracity so remarkable, and her system of jobbing so odious, that she makes one forget she is a woman."

"Thirty years ago," said Mr. Desmond, "she would be little disposed to pardon this oblivion of her sex; for I date a dislike to me, which even her policy cannot prevent her from occasionally showing, to my neglect of the charms of the woman—for, strange to say, she once had charms—a neglect which originated in the disgust excited by the manœuvres of the intriguante. I was to have been ruled, as she had ruled all the rest of her neighbors, by blandishments or diplomacy; but both schemes failed, and the consequence is, she has never forgiven me. Every time I see her approach my wife and daughter, or the wives and daughters of my friends, I think them profaned by her society; knowing, as I do, the vileness of her character, and the *mechancheté* of her nature. All this is universally allowed by all who know her, but by the assistance of sheer impudence, she has established herself in a forced position in society, though she is as generally an object of dislike as of dread to all who come in contact with her. Of her may be said,

"'With that dull, rooted, callous impudence,
Which, dead to shame, and every nicer sense,
Ne'er blush'd, unless, in spreading vice's snares,
She blunder'd on some virtue unawares.'"

A poor girl, who acted as bar-maid at the Cat and Bagpipes, and to whom Grace Cassidy had shown kindness on more than one occasion, having overheard the threats vowed against Springmount and its inhabitants, thought it right to apprise Grace of them, and stole out to give her the information. The dream of Rattling Bill, which made a deep impression on the superstitious mind of the girl, was not omitted. Grace having learned all she could from Judy Mulvany, hastily dismissed her, and betook herself to a consultation with Mary Mahoney on what steps it was best to pursue: the delicacy of both was deeply wounded at the idea of exposing their benefactors to such danger, and they agreed that this reflection was the most painful of all the sufferings inflicted on them.

"We ought no longer to stay beneath their roof," said Grace; "for never should I know a happy moment, if any misfortune occurred here, of which the protection afforded to us was the cause. Dearly as I love Cologan, and, God knows, its mountains, woods, and river, are, as it were, a part of myself, I would rather never see them again, than expose this dear good family to the risk of danger."

"But where shall we go?" said Mary Mahoney, whose energies, weakened by bodily and mental suffering, were no longer capable of resisting as formerly the outrages of fortune.

"No matter, dear Mary," said Grace, "any where, provided that we draw not troubles on others."

"You are right, Grace ma-vourneen," replied Mary; "we ought to go away, for it would be too cruel to have our benefactors suffer for us."

"But how to screen them from the danger that threatens at present," said Grace; "if we tell the master, he will have all the soldiers here, who will fire on, and kill the half, if not the whole of these misguided men. Och! it's terrible to think of, but something must be done, and done quickly."

After a few minutes pause, Grace said, "I'll go myself to the meeting, and speak to 'em; but this must be kept a secret from Jim; for he would either insist on going with me, which would spoil all, or prevent my going."

"Och! Grace avourneen, I tremble for you," said Mary Mahoney, "exposing yourself to the violence of these intemperate men. If I could go with you, I should be less afraid."

"Fear not, my dear Mary," said Grace "I shall be in the hands of God, and being alone, and totally unprotected before

'em, their pity will be more excited than their anger. My only fear is, the not being able to work on their feelings; but for myself, I fear nothing."

"Let us pray to the Almighty, in whose hands is the issue of all," said Mary, "for he alone can touch the hearts of these stubborn men." The two women knelt and prayed together, with a fervency known only to those, who have no hope but in prayers, and both arose with calmed feelings, and increased confidence, in *that Power* which alone can save.

A thought had suggested itself to Grace. The dream of Rattling Bill, which seemed not only to have made a deep impression on his mind, but on that of some of his partisans, as related by Judy Mulvany, might be turned to good account. Might not a deviation from truth, on such a momentous occasion, an occasion when the lives of so many of her fellow-creatures were at stake be pardonable? and yet with the purity of her unsophisticated mind, she shrank from a falsehood even to work good.

"Och! sure it's like play acting," said Grace to herself, "and I don't like it; but what's to be done? I have no other means of saving 'em all, so God must forgive me for taking advantage of Rattling Bill's dream."

Judy Mulvany having told her that the party were to assemble at a field near the Cat and Bagpipes, at twelve o'clock, Grace determined to go there, and as soon as her husband slept, to proceed on her perilous embassy.

It may well be imagined, that the remainder of the day passed not without agitation to Grace; and when she retired to rest, she counted with impatience the moments, until the heavy breathing of Jim should assure her that he slept. He fell into a doze, and she was on the point of stealing from her couch, when at the first movement, he started from his slumber, and muttering, "Grace, Grace, dear, don't leave me," grasped her arm.

She trembled with emotion. How strange that he should wake at such a moment! and still more strange that he should ask her not to leave him! But in a few minutes the heavy breathing of Jim assured her that he slept soundly, his hand relaxed its grasp of her arm, and she gently, and with noiseless step, left her bed.

The moon-beams shed their light in the chamber, and Grace, ere she had courage to leave it, paused to cast a parting look at her sleeping husband. "What if I should never see him again!" thought Grace; and the blood froze at her heart, at the possibility—"Och! no, no! God is good," cried she; and, murmuring a blessing on the sleeper, and a prayer for herself, she left the room, and sought a closet near to it, where she arranged the clothes in which she meant to attire herself. She put on a white dress, and wrapped a dark blue cloak over her person, and having let herself out of the house, by the servants' offices, with trembling step and a heating heart, repaired to the field pointed out to her by Judy Mulvany, stealing along by the side of the hedge for concealment.

She found many persons already assembled, all armed, and a quantity of combustibles, heaped ready for their wicked purpose. The sight of so many armed men, and the precision with which they went through the different evolutions, at the command of Rattling Bill, aided by the reflection of her own utter helplessness, awed poor Grace, and she trembled as they approached her place of concealment. But when Rattling Bill addressed them, every word of his speech thrilling on her ear, and increasing the pulsation of her heart, as she listened in breathless suspense, her terror for those so dear to her conquered all her fears for self.

"It is decided boys," said Bill, that Springmount is this night to be burned to the ground, but it is *not* yet decided whether its owners and the Sassenachs who are with them, are to share its destruction; I have proposed to leave their fates to the votes of you all, so let those who wish to save them, cry 'yes,' and those who doom them to death, cry 'no.'"

A silence as of the grave reigned for a moment, it was as if each felt the fearful responsibility of his deliberation; hope arose in the breast of Grace, but it was only to be chilled the next moment. As the cry of death struck on her ear, the moon-beams fell on the face of Rattling Bill, and Grace remarked that an expression of sorrow and disappointment paled his brow.

"Do I hear right?" asked Bill; "do ye doom the family and their friends to death?"

"We do," was the reply, and her heart sank within her as she heard it.

"Now then," thought Grace, "is the moment;" and, casting off her cloak, she rose up before the party, the moon casting its silver radiance on her snowy drapery, and giving almost a celestial expression to her pallid face.

"Boys, boys, you'd destroy me, but I'd save you. Turn from your evil courses,

and repent, and let me be your guardian" —angel, she could not bring herself to add.

"'Tis her, 'tis her, just as she appeared in my dream!" said Bill, "and she shall be heard."

A number of the men opposed her being listened to, and made cutting remarks on her presence;—"She's a play-actor," said one—"Och! she knows well enough what she's about," said another.

But the personal friends of Rattling Bill, and they were the most numerous, insisted on her being heard; and Bill, with deep reverence, led her amongst them, forming a group of his most influential friends around her.

"Why have you come here, Grace Cassidy?" asked Bill.

"The Almighty has put it into my heart," answered Grace—"Who amongst you, friends and neighbors as you have been to me since my infancy," said Grace, "ever saw me forget the modesty of a woman, and come before you thus boldly even in the light of day? then may you well believe, that I would not now, in the dead hour of night, venture alone, and unprotected before you, were I not commanded by a Power that quells fear. You stand on the edge of a fearful precipice, and can I, your own country woman, your friend, and neighbor, do otherwise, than try to save you? I forget that you've left me homeless, and a dependant on charity for a roof to cover my head; I forget that you have stamped names of infamy on my husband, who has done nought but yield to my prayers of abandoning you—but who would never betray; I forget that you are about to destroy those who have sheltered us in our hour of need; I forget all, but that you are my friends and neighbors, and that I am commanded to save you. The troops are arrived, and are within call of Springmount. The family are on their guard; any attempt to attack, or set fire to the house, must end in your total destruction. Be warned, and rush not on your ruin."

"She is right!" burst from several voices; "it's no good attempting it! Sure, she's sent here by God to warn us! Does'nt this prove there was sense in Rattling Bill's dream?"

Grace smiled at observing how well her plan worked on their superstitious feelings; and Bill, no longer master of himself, cried out, "Look at her, look at her!—I'll swear there she is, standing just for all the world, barring she has not the wings to her shoulders, as she appeared in my dream, with just the same smile, and not a step will I or my friends take against her advice."

"That we won't, that we won't!" was echoed around. But Gavin, and a few more of the most discontented of the party murmured that it was hard to have come there for nothing; and that, "after all, ould Desmond and his Sassenach son-in-law were their enemies, and ought to be punished."

"You know not what you utter," said Grace; "but if you knew the goodness, the mildness, and the mercy of the master and his son, as I do, you would lay down your lives to serve him, instead of being here at this hour plotting to destroy him. Whom did he ever injure, and whom is it that he has not served? You have all turned against him, because you are ashamed to look at his noble face and gray locks after your ingratitude. Boys, boys! where are the fine, manly, honest Irish hearts, that were an honor to the country —hearts that were full of love and loyalty?—and what has Mr. Desmond done to turn ye? Tell me one single example of tyranny or bad usage that he has ever been guilty of? No, you cannot: but how many acts of generosity, charity, and mercy could I bring to your minds! I repeat to you that I am commanded to warn ye. I have done my duty, let the rest be on your own heads. I call God to witness that neither the family at Springmount, nor my husband, know that I am come amongst you;—oh, let me not have come in vain!"

They consulted for some time together, and the voice of Bill and his friends were heard, drowning those of Gavin and his adherents. A dozen of the former, headed by Bill, approached Grace, and addressed her in the following terms;

"Grace Cassidy, we believe, and we have private reasons of our own for it, that you have been marked out by Providence to save us. We will follow your advice—no injury shall be done to Mr. Desmond or his property—and you may return with the happy thought of having saved many lives."

A smile of joy and gratitude illumined the face of Grace; and Bill again cried out, "There she is! with just the same smile, and all, barring the wings, just as I saw her in my dream!"

Bill and his friends conducted Grace to the entrance at Springmount, with as much respectful deference as if she was the mistress of that mansion; for, in addition to the respect her virtue, modesty, and cou-

rage excited, was now joined a superstitious reverence, attached to her in consequence of Bill's dream, and her appearance and words so exactly corresponding with it.

When Grace found herself once more safe beneath the roof of Mr. Desmond, she threw herself on her knees, overpowered by the various emotions she had gone through, and filled with joy and gratitude at having been made the humble instrument of saving the family, she poured forth her thanksgivings to the Almighty power that had guided and protected her. She arose from prayer with calmed feelings, and having sought the pillow of the watchful and agitated Mary Mahoney, pressed her hand, and whispered, "I am safe, and we are all saved, God be thanked! Breathe not a word of what I have done to mortal!" and she glided from the chamber to seek the repose her exhausted frame and spirits so much required.

She found her husband asleep, unconscious of her nocturnal ramble; and as she pressed her pillow, she again thanked the Almighty for the security with which she could now court repose.

When Bill and his friends left Gavin and his discontented associates, they looked at each other with bitter mockery. "And so, after all," said Gavin, "we've come on a fool's errand, and there'll be no burning; and all bekase Rattling Bill is turned out a dreamer, and Grace Cassidy comes here with her palaver to turn us from our work. Be my soul, this is what I call quare goings on! I was thinking, all the time she was preaching to them fools that minded her, that I'd like to shy a stone at her and stop her potato trap for coming to spoil our divarsion."

"We must not go against Rattling Bill," said another of the party.

"No, no!" was repeated around, "we will not go against him; and you may say what ye will, but the dream was a mighty quare dream, and Bill did right to mind it."

"So he did," repeated several voices, "and we'll stick to Bill."

"But isn't it too bad for us to go home like fools," said Gavin, "without having done any thing? Sure, I know a nice bit of mischief we could do, if we set off before Bill and the boys come back, and there's no dream to prevent it."

"What's that? Tell us at onc't," cried a dozen voices.

"Well then," said Gavin, "let us go and burn down the new barrack that ould cat Lady Abberville is building; she that's making the poor masons work extra hours, but never gives 'em an extra halfpenny. Ay, ay, my boys, let us be off, and to work; for sure it would be a pity to let all our illegant materials for setting fire be lost."

The desire for executing this new project of mischief spread like lightning among the party, and ere five minutes from its being first proposed, they were on their road to put it into execution.

Having kindled the flames at every side of the barrack, "Sure," said Gavin, "it's a pity we don't burn the house over the heads of the ould jobbers; the bloodsuckers, that's been living on the plunder of the country for years—ay, and often set us on to mischief too, by underhand encouragement, just for her own ends."

"Yes, yes, let us set fire to the house," cried all the party; and they quickly proceeded to Lord Abberville's, and as quickly set fire to different parts of the house and offices, which soon sent forth a blaze, which was hailed with joy by the incendiaries.

The flames increased every moment, and embraced every side of the mansion, before the inmates were aware of their danger. The servants rushed through the burning doors, uttering piercing shrieks; but no one thought of rescuing the unpopular master or mistress, who awoke not until all retreat by the stairs was impracticable; and they appeared at the windows frantic with terror, and demanding assistance with cries of distraction and anguish.

Gavin mocked at their suffering and mimicked their movements, and when some of his less ferocious companions proposed saving them by putting a ladder to the window, he would not permit it.

A few minutes more must have been fatal to them, when a dozen men rushed forward with ladders, and the one who led them placing four at their base, and six to guard an open space, two mounted the ladders and rescued the agonised Lord and Lady Abberville from their perilous position, amid the cheers of some of those who, a few minutes before, would have equally cheered the destruction of the persons now saved. Such is the mobility of the natures of this inconstant people!

Having seen Grace Cassidy safely housed at Springmount, Rattling Bill and his associates were returning to their homes, when the lurid flames of the barrack mounting towards the sky, attracted their attention.

"What can it be?" said one. "Sure; it's in the direction of Lord Abberville's," cried another. "Let us go directly," said

Rattling Bill, "and help to extinguish the flames."

They rapidly pursued their course across the fields, and arrived only in time to see the crumbling walls of the barrack totter and fall to the ground, and the mansion of Lord Abberville blazing in the distance. They flew, rather than ran; and having seized the ladders in the garden, placed them against the burning walls of the house, and assisted the terrified Lord and Lady to descend. Rattling Bill was the hero on this occasion, and without his services the owners of the burning pile must have mingled their ashes with those of their residence.

All their personal property was lost. They had not even garments to cover them; and the wretched couple, covered with the great coats of the compassionate peasantry, sat on the steps of the green-house, sending back reproaches to each other.

"*Eh bien*, Milor," said Lady Abberville, "you see what your obstinacy has brought on us! I always said your continued *betises* could not fail to draw mischief and trouble on us."

"You forget said Lord Abberville, "how unpopular your eternal intrigues and manœuvres have rendered you; and I dare be sworn, that the dislike of the peasantry to *you*, and not to *me*, is the cause of this fearful outrage."

"*Par example*," said the angry lady, "I give you joy of this new discovery; but you always were *bete*, and *bete* you'll continue to the end of the chapter."

The irritated Lord, provoked beyond endurance, cried out to the crowd, "Tell me, boys, whether you have been instigated to fire my house by your dislike to me?"

"No, no!" was repeated by nearly all the persons present.

"I told you so," said Lord Abberville, turning with an air of triumph to his wife: "so you see, Lady Abberville, it was their dislike to you that prompted them."

"No, this will I never believe!" said Lady Abberville, "for I know they despise you. Tell me," said the angry lady, "what led you to the injury you have done us?"

"Why then, if you must know," said Rattling Bill, "it was contempt of your husband, and dislike of yourself. We have looked upon him as a weak fool in your hands, but we've considered you as something worse—an artful, designing rogue."

The rage of both may be easily imagined: that of the husband was more concentrated; but the anger of the wife evaporated in speculations of the claims this outrage would give them on the government.

"Mind, Lord Abberville," said Miladi; "that you swear all my diamonds, 'the family diamonds,' were destroyed: few people know, that they were melted long ago, and that paste supplied their place; you must, therefore, talk of their value, with a lengthened face, and a woful shake of the head. The plate, the 'family plate,' too, must figure *in alto relievo* in our schedule of losses: you must dwell on the quantity and massiveness of it; you cannot say too much, for recollect you are only making a substantive of what was merely a participle; and between plate and plated there is little difference, except to the buyer and seller. If you play your cards well, we may turn this night's adventure to a profitable account, and a burned house may prove a richer argosy than we have ever yet freighted. Our picture gallery, (with half-a-dozen vile copies,) our library, (with a hundred or two bad novels,) may be *ad infinitum* swelled into a collection of splendid pictures, as unique from their quantity as their quality; and the books, the combined researches of generations, of the literature of all countries. Our furniture, (the ruined heirlooms of our ancestors,) unseemly to sight, and unfit for use, may be magnified into the most costly and elegant *meubles*, uniting the splendor of the reign of Louis Quatorze, with all the convenience of modern refinement. I hope our *remise* and *écuries* are burnt down, for that will allow of our adding the splendid establishment of horses, (consisting of two hacks, and a pair of spavined carriage-horses,) to the list of our losses, with the elegant carriages, for which Lord and Lady Abberville had long been distinguished."

Heartless as was Lord Abberville, he shrank from the calculating coldness of his wife, who, in a few minutes after her escape from a fearful death, was plotting the falsehoods, most likely to render the danger she had escaped from, profitable; but the intriguante had as completely lost sight of past danger, in her plans of rendering it advantageous to her future prospects, as if it had occurred years, instead of a few minutes before.

The moment the roof fell in with a crash, Gavin and his friends shouted in triumph, and, the work of destruction being now completed, retired from the scene of action. Little did they imagine that the

mistress of the burning ruins hailed their destruction with even more joy than they did; had they suspected it, their triumph would have been damped.

A servant was despatched to Springmount to announce the catastrophe that had taken place; in due time a carriage, laden with pelisses and great coats, arrived to bear the Lord and Lady to the hospitable roof of Mr. Desmond, where they experienced all the kindness to which their circumstances, rather than their merits, entitled them.

Before leaving his dressing-room next morning, a letter was delivered to Mr. Desmond from Rattling Bill, in which, with the frankness that characterised his nature, he detailed the intention of the Repealers to set fire to Springmount the night before, and to sacrifice its inhabitants to the flames. He stated that to the courageous conduct of Grace Cassidy they owed their safety, and that, knowing the modesty of her feelings, a sense of justice prevented him from allowing the part she had taken in the last night's adventures to remain concealed.

"Grace Cassidy has opened my eyes," wrote Bill, "to the delusion I have indulged in, when I believed you, honored sir, to be our enemy. The veil has dropped from my sight, and I deplore my errors; but, having violated the laws, I fly from Ireland, to seek in America that peace which my own folly has deprived me of here. Before I go, I have exacted a promise from those over whom I had influence, never to harm you or yours; I know they will be faithful to it, and I also know that you will repay the pure and fearless woman who has saved your lives, and preserved from crime,

"Your now faithful servant,

"Bill Donovan."

Mr. Desmond sent to Grace Cassidy to meet him in the library, as soon as he had perused Rattling Bill's letter, and when he saw the diffident looks and bashful countenance of Grace, as she presented herself before him, he could hardly believe that it was this timid woman who had braved the presence of a riotous rabble the night before, to save him and his family.

"Grace," said Mr. Desmond, taking her hand, "I know all that you did last night, and I shall never forget it."

"Och! dear master," said Grace, her cheeks becoming suffused with a tint that rivalled the rose, "who tould you? Sure it was nothing at all, for what was a life like mine compared to yours, and the dear Mistress and Mrs. Forrester's? And then it was worth while risking twenty lives to show these poor misguided men that they were wrong. Excuse my freedom for daring to speak so boldly before you, honored sir, but after my husband and your dear blessed family, sure I feel my next duty is to my poor misguided, but always dear, countrymen. The most insignificant person may serve his country, as the mouse gave liberty to the lion by gnawing the meshes of the net that entangled him, and therefore I took courage to speak the truth to those I love."

"Come, with me, my good Grace, to the breakfast-room," said Mr. Desmond, "that all the company may know to whom they owe their lives."

"Och! please, sir, to excuse me," said Grace, "I only did my duty, and, above all, my husband does not yet know that I left his side last night, and I beg, honored sir, you will not mention it till he knows it."

Mr. Desmond sent for Jim Cassidy, that he might have the pleasure of telling him of the heroism and admirable conduct of his wife; though Grace blushed a rosy red, when the master lavished on her the epithet she so well deserved.

But no sooner was Jim made sensible of what she had done, to the details of which he listened with open eyes, ears and mouth, than he ran to Grace, and falling on his knees, while the tears coursed each other down his cheeks, he exclaimed, his voice broken by sobs, "Yes, sir, she's a blessed woman, and a guardian angel to all she loves; but I, I'm not worthy to belong to her, and I know it, I feel it, for all she's so loving and kind to me."

Grace, unrestrained by the presence of Mr. Desmond, threw herself into the arms of her husband, and, while pressing him to her heart, said, "Don't say so, dear, dear Jim, for if there's more good in my heart than in the hearts of other women, it's the warm love for you that has brought it out, just as the sun brings out the flowers of the earth."

Mr. Desmond insisted on leading Grace to the breakfast-room, where he briefly informed the party that, if they were all assembled there in safety, they owed it to the heroism of Grace Cassidy. The compliments and commendations she received on all sides, deeply embarrassed her; but the warm shakes of the hand of the dear ould mistress, Mrs. Forrester, and Ladies Oriel and Tadcaster, encouraged her.

Lady Abberville interrupted their commendations, to reproach Grace for not having saved her house and property, instead of allowing her diamonds, plate, furniture, pictures, library, horses, and carriages, to be consumed.

Mr. and Mrs. Desmond looked at her with astonishment, at hearing the recapitulation of this *catalogue raisonnée* of her losses, having frequently observed the paucity of even the common comforts of life in her mansion; and both felt inclined to smile, as the speculation of the intriguante was exposed to them.

Mr. Desmond and Colonel Forrester fixed a comfortable annuity on Grace Cassidy, her husband, and their future offspring: and the Lords and Ladies Tadcaster and Oriel subscribed a considerable sum to be vested for her use. But, when Grace heard of it, she entreated that it might be appropriated to the wants of Patrick and Mary Mahoney, charged with a small provision for Larry M'Swigger.

This generosity increased the admiration the whole party felt for her; and though her wishes of providing for the Mahoneys and Larry M'Swigger were carried into effect, her benefactors insisted that the sum they had subscribed for Grace should be appropriated wholly to her use.

Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester, in due time, gave birth to sons; Lord Oriel's restored happiness soon banished his too great susceptibility, and he is now considered to be one of the happiest husbands in England, as is Lady Oriel one of the happiest wives.

Lady Tadcaster is pronounced to be as faultless a wife as daughter, and her friends rejoice in her happiness; and Lady Delmore is once more on the point of approaching the hymeneal altar, with better prospects of happiness, being led to it by the good Duke of Bridgenorth. Grace Cassidy has given birth to a daughter, to whom Lady Oriel and Mrs. Forrester stood sponsors, and the village of Cologan looks, and is, more flourishing than ever.

Repealers are no more heard of; they have died a natural death: and the Union between England and Ireland bids fair to become every day more indissoluble, by the strengthening of the strongest of all bonds of union—favors conferred, and gratitude excited.

# THE CONFESSIONS

OF AN

# ELDERLY GENTLEMAN.

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# ELDERLY GENTLEMAN.

"Who cares, or thinks, about Elderly Gentlemen?" methinks I hear a young lady exclaim as throwing down this book with a disdainful air, she demands of the shopman at the library, "If there is not something new?"

You mistake, fair lady; many are they who think of little else than of Elderly Gentlemen; but alas! these are young *wives* impatient to enact the part of young *widows;* heirs in a hurry to come into possession; holders of post obits; expectant legatees; and *faithful* servants anxious to render the last duties to their dear masters, and to receive the meed of their *disinterested* services. This is an autobiographical-loving age; why, then, should *I* not amuse myself, if not my readers, by revealing the experience I have acquired, if it were only for the purpose of establishing two facts which many young men seem to doubt; namely, that *vanity* is not solely confined to *women;* and that all old gentlemen, however improbable it may appear, were once young? Perhaps, I have also another, and less disinterested object in view—the discomfiture of time, that ruthless enemy, which has lately begun to press heavily on me. I endeavored to kill *it* in my youth, but now it has laid me by the heels; for, in sober sadness, I am a victim to gout, unable to move from my easy chair, and, consequently, more than ever sensible of the power of my antagonist. *Apropos* of gout: I wish the erudite 'Doctor,' who has helped me to beguile many a tedious hour, by his recondite and 'right merie' lucubrations would favor the world, in his next volume, with an etymological chapter on that malady; proving, for instance, as he might easily do, that it derives its cognomen from the French word *goût*, which we translate by taste; for who, *without* taste, ever had the gout? and how few *with* have ever escaped it!

* * *

I have been many years absent from England, wandering in search of that yet undiscovered good, "a fine climate;" which, like happiness, for ever eludes the pursuer, though constantly holding out delusive prospects of its attainment. The seachers of *one*, like those of the other, are, in general, confined to the class who, possessed of more wealth than wisdom, make unto themselves an imaginary good; and then set out in a weary chase of it.

*Blasé* with that most fatiguing of all lives, a life of pleasure, and suffering under its never-failing consequences, a mind teeming with *ennui*, and a frame weakened by luxurious indulgence, I determined to visit the Continent; and traversed France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain, in the vain belief, that a 'mind diseased,' and worn-out constitution, were to be renovated by the magical air of the south. What its effect might have been, I have yet to learn; for I have been nearly frozen by the *bise* in the south of France; enervated almost to annihilation by the sirocco in Italy; reduced nearly to a state of fusion in Sicily; and scorched into a cinder in Spain and Portugal, without having yet discovered the object of my search, a fine climate.

I returned to England after many long and weary years of absence, rather worse in health than when I left it; as the incursions made on my already debilitated constitution, by undue heat, unlooked for winds, and unwholesome diet, instead of retarding, tended to advance, the effects of that cruel enemy, Time. Wine too sour to admit of its copious use, food too insipid to induce even a gourmand, much

less an epicure, to commit an excess, enforce the adoption of *temperance* on those who are the most opposed to it; and *this virtue*, so seldom practised at home, is the whole, the sole, advantage to be derived from a continental residence. Tired of feeding on flour tortured into all the varied forms ycelped macaroni, vermicelli, lasague, tortellini, parpadella, patta di puglia, ravioli, and half a hundred other insipid dishes; and of devouring beccaficos, thrushes, and blackbirds, washed down by ungenerous liquids, misnamed wines, I left the Continent; my stomach weakened by unsubstantial sustenance, and my skin seamed by the repeated and vigorous attacks of those murderers of sleep, mosquitos and sand-flies, that so often destroyed mine, in spite of all the futile aids of Russia leather pillows, and gauze curtains, entitled mosquito nets; which last more frequently serve to imprison your tormentor with you, than to exclude him.

Returned, thank Heaven, to my native land, I resigned myself a willing victim to all the luxuries it can boast. I offered up whole hetacombs of turtle and venison to appease the wrath of my long restricted and much injured appetite; and felt most sensibly that patriotic sentiment so much lauded by poets and orators, denominated *love of country;* which is only another term for the love of its table and fireside. With what a gusto, as the Italians say, did I indulge in old sherry, madeira that had twice crossed the line, and claret such as one never finds out of Great Britain! the thin and acid beverage of the Continent known by the name of Bordeaux, bearing as little affinity to that excellent wine, as lachryma christi does to champagne. With how much more pleasure did I contemplate an orchard in Herefordshire, and the hop-grounds in Kent, than I had ever experienced in viewing the orange groves and vineyards of southern climes; and a coal fire was hailed as an old familiar friend is welcomed after a long absence. So much was my *amor patriæ* increased by a return to its comforts, that not even the opaque fog which presented itself like a dense curtain of pea soup, to my startled sight, one morning in the November after my return, could disgust or alarm me. I ordered lights, shut out the day, and commanded an extra luxurious dinner. In a few months I was hardly to be recognised, so great was the change produced in my outward man. My white face had become of a rich rubicund hue, making the "erst pale, one red;" my lank person, which, on arriving from the Continent, resembled the portraits of "the lean and slippered pantaloon," assumed a portly protuberance; and my feet, those barometers of health, gave indications that good living had produced its certain effect, a severe fit of gout, which soon confined me to the sofa, a resting-place whereunto I am now generally condemned more that half the year.

Change of air having been prescribed for me, I lately proceeded to this country-seat of mine, which I have not visited for twenty-five years; and, *pour passer le temps*, as the French say, I have had the drawers of my old escritoire brought to my easy chair, and have sought amusement in examining their contents. What piles of letters, in delicate hand writing, tied up with ribands of as delicate die, met my pensive gaze; gentle ghosts of departed pleasures and forgotten pains! What miniatures of languishing blue-eyed blondes, and sparkling piquantes brunettes! What long ringlets of hair of every color, from the lightest shade of auburn (maliciously called red) to the darkest hue of the raven's wing! What rings, pins, and lockets, were scattered around, with mottoes of eternal love and everlasting fidelity! which eternal love and everlasting fidelity had rarely withstood the ordeal of six months' intimacy. What countless pairs of small white gloves! What heaps of purses, the works of delicate fingers! What piles of fans, the half-authorised thefts of ball-rooms, thefts so gently rebuked and so languidly reclaimed! What knots of riband grasped in the mazy dance! What girdles, yielded with blushing, coy delay! with bouquets of faded flowers enough to stock the *hortus siccus* of half the botanists in England! and a profusion of seals, with devices each more tender than the other!

The past, with all its long forgotten pleasures and pains, rose up to my imagination; recalled into life by these *gages d'amour*, which had survived the passions they were meant to foster; but which now so far fulfilled their original destination, as to make their donors suddenly and vividly present to my memory, as though they had been summoned into a brief existence by the magical wand of a necromancer. The loved—the changed—the dead—stood before me in their pristine charms; and I felt towards each, and all, some portion of long vanished tenderness revive in my breast. Beautiful sex! sooth-

ers in our affliction, and best enliveners in our hours of happiness, all that I have known of joy on earth, I owe to your smiles, to your partiality!

This miniature represents my first love, not the object of my crude, puerile fancy; for what stripling has ever passed from fifteen to twenty, without having fancied himself, at least half a dozen times, smitten with the tender passion? what youth has ever been philosopher enough to have resisted the charms of an attractive nursery governess; or the younger sister, or daughter, of the preceptor, under whose roof he studied lessons of love and erudition at the same time?

No—this picture has nothing to do with such *minor* phantasies. It represents her who engendered in me the first rational sentiment of attachment I ever experienced, the first woman that led me to anticipate with pleasurable feelings the holy state of wedlock, as a *near*, and not as a *perspective* good, as a happiness to be attained as speedily as possible, and not as a change of life to be endured, as best it might be, at some remote period. How vast is the difference, by the way, between a passion and a sentiment! The first may be excited for an unworthy object, and in an unworthy mind; by a silly girl for a sillier boy; but the second can only be inspired by a pure woman, and entertained by an honorable man. One of the many distinctions, between the two sexes, is, that women feel love as a sentiment; while with men, it is a passion: hence, it takes a deeper root, and is of longer duration, with them, than with us. But, in proportion to our intellectual cultivation, this peculiarity becomes less frequent; for imagination and refinement once enlisted beneath the banners of love, *that* becomes sentiment, which, otherwise, would have been solely passion.

But, to return from this digression (and I warn my readers, if I should be so fortunate as to find any, that I am given to digress,) I now begin the narrative of my first love, verifying the words of the old French song—

> "On en revient toujours,
> A ses premiers amours."

Louisa Sydney, the original of the miniature now before me, was one of the fairest specimens of her sex, that nature ever formed. There are the eyes, blue as heaven's own cerulean hue, and the cheek with its delicate tint, resembling the leaf of a newly blown rose. There are the long and silken tresses of lightest brown, that wantoned over her finely rounded shoulders, descending to a waist, whose exquisite symmetry was unequalled. Well do I remember, when one of those silken glossy ringlets was severed from her beautiful head, to fill the locket now before me! Poor, dear Louisa! how she loved me! There is something soothing and delightful in the recollection of a pure minded woman's affection; it is the oasis in the desert of a worldly man's life, to which his feelings turn for refreshment, when wearied with the unhallowed passions of this work-o'day world. I would not voluntarily relinquish the memory of Louisa's love for all—all—what shall I say!—Alas! *my* all of enjoyment is now so limited, that I have little to resign; but that, and much, much more, would I surrender, sooner than part from the conviction that she loved me.

Louisa Sydney was not only beautiful, but she was mild and gentle, beyond description; yet her gentleness, and amazing docility, had nothing of insipidity in them, for they originated in a perfect freedom from selfishness, that led her to yield her own wishes to those of the person she loved, a concession, not of *reason* but of *volition*. She absolutely lived for those dear to her; and had more pleasure in obeying their desires, than in gratifying her own.

There was a sweet pensiveness in her nature, that harmonised perfectly with the peculiar character of her beauty.—Hers was not a mind prone to gloom, but of that subdued and tender order, which, like a summer twilight, in itself beautiful, disposes all to feel its mild and soothing influence. One could not have told *her*, with the slightest prospect of success, a ludicrous story, a whimsical quibble, or any one of the various bad jokes, with which the conversation of the generality of persons is assisted in society. But, she was one, to whom the fairest flowers, the most imaginative poem, or the most elevated work on practical holiness, would be felt to be an appropriate offering. Strongly tinctured with romance, the romance of youthful refinement, which is a natural attribute of the best and purest of her sex, ere experience has driven the illusions of early youth away, Louisa shrank from the busy world, affrighted and stunned with its turmoil; and opened her innocent heart to the contemplation of the charms of nature, and the adoration of the God who created them.

What pictures we draw of the future!—love, not in a cottage, because she knew my lot had rendered my home a stately one, but *she* would have preferred a more humble abode.

"A cottage," has she often said, "overgrown with woodbine, jessamine, and roses, sheltered by a wood, with a clear stream gliding in front of a garden, redolent with flowers; *this*, dearest Harry, would be my choice."

"And our food, dearest," would I reply, in bantering mood, "should be milk, honey, and curds, with new-laid eggs, and simple fruits."

"Well, such food would amply content *me*," would Louisa say, "but your sex are always thinking of a good dinner. Yet, would you all be better and happier, because more healthy, if your diet was more simple; but you 'yearn for the flesh pots,' the green fat of turtle, or the white muscle of venison, the racy juice of Spain's vines, and the iced vintage of France. Ah, Harry, Harry—

'These little things, disguise it how you can,
These little things are dear to little man!'"

Ye gods, what a twinge that was! it seemed as if a red-hot knitting needle was shot through my foot; and the exclamation it occasioned brought my blockhead of a servant in, with—"If you please, sir, did you call?"—Did I call? if I had, he would not have been so prompt in his attendance; for, during the last twenty years, I have remarked, that servants rarely come, when one *does* require them, and always when one does *not*. Oh! this plaguy gout! how dependent it makes a man feel! for not only does it "fill all his bones with aches, make him roar," but it impresses him with the agreeable conviction, that if a spark from the fire should by chance be attracted towards his garments, he might be consumed at leisure, unless some servant should arrive to his rescue. Ah! why did I *not* marry? why not have secured to myself a legitimate, a licensed nurse, whose duty, if not pleasure, it would have been, to have watched the paroxysms of this fearful malady, and to have noted the want of philosophy with which they were endured? People are always so philosophically stoical to the sufferings of their *near* and *dear* relatives, and so ready to accuse them of not bearing the ills to which flesh is heir with becoming equanimity.—Another twinge!—Oh! ye gods, what martyrdom!

Psha, psha, at this rate my confession will never be made. "*Tant mieux*," says my tired, if not tiresome reader. Let me see, where was I? Poor, dear Louisa! we thought not of gout in her day; no, no, nor of the necessity of *easy* chairs, in which persons are most *uneasily* placed; nor of sofas, reclined on which, a wretch suffers more than on the bed of Procrustes. In her day, I only remembered that I had feet for dancing.—*Now*, Lord help me, when I look on my swollen and bandaged foot which resembles a bloated Esquimaux child, I can hardly believe that I ever could have sported "on the light fantastic toe," or "brushed the dew-drops from the grass, at early morn." In Louisa's time, I as *little* contemplated my present state of purgatory, as I then abandoned myself to the indulgence which has entailed on me these sufferings. The indulgences of the *heart*, then occupied me more than those of the stomach: would that the former had always constituted my enjoyment!

But to resume.—Let me open this pacquet of letters, written with a crow quill. How delicate is the writing, and the riband that holds them together, *couleur de rose*, like the cheek of the fair writer when they were penned—that cheek—what is it now? Poor, dear Louisa!

Here is the first letter she ever wrote me, for I see I numbered them.

"I fear you will think me too lightly won, and blame my imprudence in answering the note you placed in my hand on leaving the ball. That note has told me all that I longed to know, which I hoped, yet doubted. And yet a feeling of remorse poisoned my enjoyment while reading it; for conscience whispered that I ought not to have received it, and that in perusing it I violated the duty I owe dear mamma; Every word of kindness from her (and never does she speak to me save in kindness) seems to reproach me for this duplicity. Do let me tell her; or, better still, confess to her yourself, that you love me; for there is something that looks like guilt in mystery, which renders it abhorrent to me."

Poor dear Louisa!

Here is No. 2.

"What a delightful picture you have drawn of our future lives! But can you, dearest Harry, give up the gay and brilliant world, which you have enjoyed with such a zest, to retire to some sequestered home with me? I rejoice that you like green fields, trees, flowers, and birds, almost as much as I do." (Poor dear soul! I had

persuaded her, and myself too, that I was a perfect Corydon.) "From my infancy I had felt delight in them, and this sympathy in our tastes is a new link in the chain of affection that binds us. I thought, but perhaps it was only fancy, that you looked pale last night, and this thought haunted my pillow." Poor Louisa, if she saw me now, with this rubicund face! "I hope you are not ill, dear Henry; or if ill, that you will not make light of your indisposition. *Now* that you know the happiness of another depends on you, you must be careful of your health. It is by suggesting to me a similar reflection, that dear good mamma makes me submit to a thousand disagreeable remedies for colds caught, and antidotes against catching them.

"Is it not even more culpable of me to write to you clandestinely, than to receive your letters?" (I had postponed declaring in form to her mother, purposely that I might enjoy the selfish gratification of triumphing over Louisa's repugnance to the maintenance of our secret correspondence.) "Indeed, Harry, I must write to you no more until mamma knows all; for she is too confiding and indulgent to be deceived by her child, on whom she has lavished such unremitting care and affection. I know not how I shall acquire courage to place this note in your hand; there is something so unfeminine, so indelicate, in acting thus, and in the presence, too, of the dear parent I am deceiving, that I blush for myself. Do not, dearest Harry, think ill of me, that my attachment to you has conquered the maidenly reserve of your

"LOUISA."

Dear, gentle soul! I think I see her now, with that deep, earnest look of tenderness with which I so often caught her beautiful eyes fixed on my face!——Why, hang me, if I am not playing the woman, and weeping for a poor, dear girl that has been in her grave these forty years! Well, I did not think I had so much softness left in my rugged nature; but if ever a girl merited to be loved and lamented, it was Louisa Sydney.

I complied with her desire, and told her mother of our attachment a week sooner than I had intended. The good lady seemed nearly as much hurt as surprised, that her daughter should have avowed a preference for any man without having first consulted her; but, a tear and a kiss from Louisa, and a few civil speeches from me, made our peace, and all was soon *couleur de rose* again.

"Mr. Lyster," said Lady Sydney, "in confiding my child to you, I give you that which is dearer to me than life itself. Louisa's feelings are as *delicate* as is, alas! her frame; neither are formed to resist even the breath of unkindness. Watch over her happiness, be careful of exposing her fragile health to any sudden changes of temperature, and forget not that you have a precious, but tender plant: she requires a never-ceasing care, but will amply reward you for it, if it please the Almighty to spare her to you."

There was a solemnity in the fond mother's appeal that threw a damp over my joy; but when I saw the bright rose blooming on the cheek of my betrothed, and marked the lustre of her beautiful eyes, I attributed Lady Sydney's warning to the anxiety of maternal affection, and almost smiled at her thinking Louisa a sickly plant. The natural docility of this lovely girl, operated upon by her strong affection for my unworthy self, gave me a most despotic empire over her; and I had the weakness of being proud of displaying it even to her mother. How often have I seen the cheek flush, and a tear start into the eye of Lady Sydney, when to gratify some caprice of mine, her too gentle daughter has neglected some wise precaution relative to her health, which I deemed superfluous, though it was urged with anxiety by the alarmed parent.

Louisa has reproached me for this conduct, saying, "How can you, Harry, make me act, even in trifles, contrary to mamma's advice. I cannot bear to see her look distressed or apprehensive; though I believe, there is no cause, for I feel well, quite well, and so happy!"

How her soft lustrous eyes beamed on me with increased tenderness, as she referred to her happiness, implying that I was its source.

"It is my dear mother's excessive love for me that makes her see danger where none exists; yet it is cruel, it is ungrateful of me, not to avoid exciting her apprehensions. I imagine myself in her place—and well can I fancy how I should feel at seeing a stranger come and usurp the authority, the love, all that had previously been exclusively mine. To resign this empire over the heart and conduct of an only child, must be a bitter feeling, until time has softened it. Why, then, take this ungenerous pleasure, dear Harry, in putting your wishes in competition with

knowing, as you too well do, that I t resist following *yours*, though I ot ungrateful enough not to suffer a ul sense of remorse while disobeying "

hen Louisa has thus spoken to me, I e tried to laugh her out of her scruples, ing her mother's precautions absurd, her remedies the quackeries of an old man. Many were the stupid pleasant-s, and bad jokes, which I lavished on e subject; and derived an idle and a uilty gratification from continually pro-osing plans of amusement, in *opposition* o the watchful care of Lady Sydney. It ppeared to me that Louisa's affection for me was most strongly displayed, when it led her to thwart the counsel of one, whose slightest wish she had hitherto joyfully obeyed: consequently my vanity and selfishness (and I had, heaven knows, an undue portion of both,) led me to indulge in this puerile, this unworthy gratification, even at the expense of the feelings of the creature dearest to me on earth.

Lady Sydney, however, bore all my guilty perversity with exemplary patience. It was plain, that seeing the extent of her daughter's attachment to me, she stifled her own sentiments, rather than risk becoming a subject of contention between us; and frequently yielded her better, wiser judgment in preference to wounding Louisa's feelings, by disputing mine.

Yet, notwithstanding little altercations, or rather a forced submission to my will, how happy was the period that followed the acceptance of my proffered hand! Though we met every day, and passed nearly the whole of it together, still I insisted on Louisa's writing to me; and now, that our engagement was ratified by her mother, she poured forth, with the artless warmth of youthful innocence, the expression of her sentiments. Ay, those *were* happy days, yet I thought not so then, for I was anticipating the still happier period when I should call this angelic creature mine.—How often have I since reproached myself for not having sufficiently prized them! How often have I recalled each word and look of her, whose every word and look gave me rapture. But such is man, never content with the present, always looking to the future, that mysterious future, whose secrets, could he but divine them, would make the present appear blissful.

I had no father to consult, a large fortune at my own disposal, and, as parsimony was not then among my faults, I gave Lady Sydney *carte blanche* for the marriage settlements. Title deeds were placed in the hands of the lawyers, those gentlemen, so blamed by impatient lovers, and commended by prudent parents, whose disagreeable duty apparently consists, not only in seeing that *no* error be committed by contracting parties, but in discovering that some oversight has taken place in the lives of their defunct progenitors.

Jewels and carriages were ordered, our portraits were exchanged, by which I became possessed of the beautiful miniature now before me; all (except the long ringlet of fair hair, and her letters) that remains to remind me of as lovely and pure a creature, as ever returned to that heaven from which, while on earth, she seemed an exile. The days of courtship are proverbial for their brevity and sweetness; mine passed with a velocity, that now appears like the quick fleeting visions of sleep, though I then often murmured at their slowness. "The *twelfth* of the next month," have I often exclaimed, "oh! would to heaven it were arrived, (it was the period fixed on for our marriage;) how intolerably slow appears the progress of time!" When I thus vented my impatience, Louisa would rebuke me, and say it was wicked, it was ungrateful to Providence, as every hour seemed marked with happiness. Even now, I seem to see her angel face, and to hear the low sweet voice, whose tones were music to my ear, though forty long and dreary years have passed over my head since she was laid in the grave.

We had agreed one evening to go on the water the following day, and to dine at Richmond. Louisa looked forward with almost childish pleasure to this excursion, as she longed to be in the country again, even for a few hours. I despatched my groom with a letter to order dinner to be prepared for us, and we talked over our party with anticipations of delight.

The next morning, the weather was sultry and oppressive, quick shifting and opaque clouds threatened rain, and Lady Sydney proposed the postponement of our excursion to a more favorable day. I fancied I saw disappointment in Louisa's sweet face, and this—but why try to evade the avowal?—With the wilfullness that had so frequently led me to oppose the prudent precautions of Lady Sydney, I was now induced to overrule her objections, and insist on our going. Louisa joined her entreaties, seeing the obstinacy with which I urged my wishes; and we embarked at

Whitehall stairs, in high spirits, notwithstanding the alarmed glances with which, from time to time, Lady Sydney regarded the overcast sky.

We passed a delightful day, rambling in the beautiful environs of Richmond; Louisa leaning on my arm, and her dove-like eyes seeking sympathy in mine, at every new feature of the enchanting landscape.

Who that has ever enjoyed the pure happiness of a walk, in a beautiful country, with the woman he loves, can forget it in after years? Every word she uttered, every change of her lovely face is remembered by me, more freshly, oh! how much more freshly than any circumstance of my later life. How often have they been recalled, and dwelt on, as only the words and looks of her we have *first* loved ever are.

"When I feel as now, dear Harry," said Louisa, laying her small white hand on my arm, "the vast goodness of Providence in not leaving me a single wish unsatisfied, I have a sort of superstitious dread, a shrinking presentiment, that such happiness is too exquisite for this world, and that it cannot endure. My very soul seems to imbibe rapture from the glories of the sky and earth, and to expand in love to the Creator, for endowing me with this ecstatic feeling for his works. My eyes are gladdened with the all-enchanting scene around us; and you, dearest, are near me to share this happiness! Oh! who can regard that blue sky, and the soft, yet vivid tints, of the many-colored foliage, the verdant lawns, whence spring a thousand odorous flowers, and that limpid river, whose glassy water seems formed to mirror the lovely scenes on its margin, without feeling an adoration for the Power that created them? Yet, in the midst of the tender, overflowing sense of gratitude with which such objects inspire me, is mingled a sadness, as I reflect on the uncertainty of life; and that, at a few hours' notice, we may be summoned to quit this beauteous, joyous earth, the blue and smiling skies, and those dearer to us—oh! how much dearer than earth or sky. Before I knew *you*, my Harry, I often contemplated death, and never with dread; but, *now*, I shrink from it with dismay; for to leave *you* would be worse than death."

I chided her for these gloomy forebodings, but she returned to them.

"I have frequently thought," continued she, "that we do not talk of death sufficiently often. What would be said of the unkind friend, who knowing that a long and inevitable journey must part him for years from some dear, dear object, should neglect to speak of it to her; or to leave her the memory that they had *together* made preparations for it. It is thus, Harry, that I would wish for us, to think of that *longer* journey, that bitter and fearful separation, death, that the survivor may have the consolation, and a blessed one it is, of knowing that the departed went not forth, without having often thought of, mourned, and prepared for the inevitable parting. Yet, though I have dreaded death since I have known you, I still think, that blessed are they who die young, ere yet life has lost any of its charms, or that the eye has learned to look on nature without delight, or the heart to kindle at its beauties without gratitude. I met these lines the other day—

'Who dies in youth 'scapes many wretched hours,
And goes unschooled in truths long life must learn;
Truths that once known, each fair illusion flies,
Never again to cheat us into joy.
The early dead know not that love can die,
And yet the hearts, that cherished it, survive:
They think not smiling friendship can deceive,
Not that the ties of blood by nature wrought,
Are weak as cords made of the ocean's foam,
Which e'en the first rude fitful blast can break;
Or like snow wreaths that melt before the sun,
Dissolving till no trace is left behind.
No, to die early is to 'scape much pain,
And pass away with all youth's gifts still with us,
Leaving a sweet though mournful memory
Of our young lives, to be for ever kept
In hearts that loved us, while we tarried here.'

And as I perused them, I felt that to die young is better than to survive happiness."

There was something so sweet, though mournful, in the tones of her voice, that though I attempted to chide her for thus dwelling on so painful a subject, I could not banter her, as was my wonted custom, whenever she was more than usually pensive. Lady Sydney interrupted us, by entreaties to return home; she saw storms and rain menacing in every cloud that floated over our heads, yet I lingered, in spite of her anxiety to embark, smiling at her fears. The unusual exercise had heated, as well as fatigued my gentle love; her mother, soon after we had entered the boat, remarked that she appeared flushed; a term I was inclined to cavil with, as I thought I had never seen Louisa look so lovely before, the heightened tint of her cheeks imparting an increased brilliancy to her eyes.

We had only proceeded half way to London, when the threatening clouds poured a deluge; and, in a few minutes, Louisa was drenched by its torrents. How

id I now reproach myself for my obstinacy n having forced her mother to consent to his party. The alarmed glances with which she examined her daughter's face, seemed prophetic of some impending evil. I caught the infectious fear, which not all the smiles of the fair object of it could pacify: and with a bitter feeling of self-reproach, I mentally promised that never again would I expose her to a similar danger by my wilfulness.

All the remedies used by the doating mother to avert the consequences of this disastrous day, proved unavailing. The next found Louisa in a fever, and her mother almost distracted. I hardly dared to meet Lady Sydney, and yet I could not bear to absent myself from her house. I felt that to my perverseness all the misery now impending over this late happy home was to be attributed; and, as each day increased the danger, I prayed, with my very soul humbled to the dust, and in a bitterness of spirit rarely felt,and never to be described, that Louisa might be spared. Her reason never left her for a moment; and she soon became fully aware that her hours were numbered. She entreated to be allowed to see me: and I was summoned to her chamber.

I found her reclined on a sofa; the hectic blush of fever on her cheek, and her beautiful eyes sparkling with an unearthly lustre. A tear dimmed their radiance as she gazed on me; and her lip trembled with emotion, as she placed her burning and already nearly transparent hand within mine. Seeing that I was almost overwhelmed by the agony of my feelings, she tried to regain composure, and whispered to me—

"Remember, dearest, that our separation is not to be eternal; for though *I* cannot stay with you on earth, you will, through the Divine mercy, come to me, where no more partings are.—I die young, sin or sorrow have not blighted me; I die beloved too, and is not this to die happy? You will remember me, Harry, going down to the grave in my youth, leaving behind me no one to blame my life, and some dear, oh! how dear, objects to mourn its brevity. Comfort my poor mother when I am gone, and prove, dearest Harry, that you truly loved me, by so regulating your life on earth, that we may be united in heaven."

Exhausted by the exertion of speaking, she fainted. The physicians drove me from the chamber: and I never saw my angelic Louisa again, until death had clasped her in his cold embrace.

On *the twelfth* of July, —93, she breathed her last, that day, which was to have seen our hands joined at the altar; that day, whose tardy approach I had so often impatiently longed for, and impiously blamed for its delay, saw her a corse. Oh! Louisa, sainted love of my youth, the unwonted tears that fill these aged eyes, prove that years, long years, have not banished your cherished image from my heart.

I have been recalled from the mournful past to the dreary present, by the indiscreet entrance of my stupid servant, who had to repeat his usual phrase of "Did you call, sir?" twice, before I was aware of his presence. The blockhead found me weeping passionately, and it was one of the exclamations wrung from me by grief, that he mistook for a *call*. His look of surprise and pity angered me. "Go away, go away, and be —— to you!" was the uncourteous exclamation which drove him and his pity away; and left me looking very foolish, and feeling not a little ashamed at having been caught weeping like a blubbering school-boy. Hang the fellow! what will he, what can he think, has occasioned my grief? He'll be sure to imagine that my tears and exclamations were wrung from me by pain. This is too vexatious; I would not have even such a lout suppose that physical suffering could wring a tear from me. And yet, if he knew that his old gouty master has been weeping for a maiden who has been more than forty years in her grave, it would make the rascal laugh. Faith, there is something ludicrous in my weakness, I must confess; yet, such was the vividness with which memory brought back old thoughts and feelings, that I forget I am an old man.

Nevertheless, there is a pleasure, though it is a very melancholy one, in remembering the days of our youth, those days when we could feel—*mentally*, I mean; for, most assuredly, senility is not devoid of its physical sensations, however its intellectual ones may be blunted. My regrets remind me of the old French woman, who said, "*Ah que je regrette ces bons vieux temps lorsque j' etois si malheureuse.*" Let me, then, prolong this luxury of wo, by recurring again to my poor lost Louisa. I could not bear that she should be consigned to "the narrow house" without my once more locking at that angel face. I watched an opportunity when her heart-broken mother had been removed, in a state of exhaustion, from the chamber of death, for I dared not meet her there. I entered it with a heart bowed down by sorrow, and trembling

limbs that almost refused to bear their wretched master.

It was early morn, a soft balmy summer's morn, when all nature seemed to awaken with renovated charms, while she, the fairest of nature's works, was faded for ever. Though in London, the little garden into which the windows of the room opened, seemed as vernal and retired as if it belonged to the country. This garden had been the favorite retreat of Louisa; it was filled with plants and rare flowers, the greater part of which had been raised by her own fair hands. They were now in all their bloom, and redolent with fragrance, the dew-drops sparkling on their leaves, while she—oh, God! how fearful was the contrast! I drew near the bier, and looked on that still lovely face. How cold, how marble-like, was its repose; yet so exquisitely soft was the character of her beauty, that it more resembled sleep than death. While I gazed on that countenance which the cold, dark grave was so soon to hide from me for ever, the birds which she had been accustomed to feed came gaily chirping to the window; and even ventured to pass the sill, chirping still more loudly, as if to claim their wonted repast. The gaiety of their notes almost maddened me; and I rose like a maniac, to chase them, and close the windows, which had been opened, when Lady Sydney had withdrawn. Again I turned to gaze on that cold, pale face, which seemed to exert a magical power over my senses.

"No, she cannot be gone from me for ever," said I. "How could I bear existence without her? How think that hours, days, weeks, months, years, are to pass away, and I never more to see *her*, who was the light of my eyes, the joy of my heart! Oh! speak to me, angel of my life! give me some sign that *I* am not all, all forgotten."

While I apostrophised the beautiful statue before me, whose Promethean spark was extinguished for ever, a musical clock on the chimney-piece commenced playing her favorite air, an air to which we had both often listened in happy hours. I almost expected it would awaken her, so powerfully did its sound bring back the past; and for the moment drive away the fearful reality of the present. As I gazed on her face, a fly, a large blue fly, fixed on her pale lip, and this awoke me to the dreadful truth.

"What, is she already, even in my presence, to become the prey of such as thou?" cried I, approaching to drive away the odious insect. But it retained its place until my hand came almost in contact with it; and only fled when that hand fell on the lip it would have saved from profanation. Its icy, rigid touch seemed to freeze my blood; and she I loved—yes, loved to adoration, became—oh God! that I should have felt it an object of fear.

I rushed from the room in a state of distraction: and a violent brain fever released me, for some weeks, from the consciousness of suffering.

I never again saw Lady Sydney, for she left England in a short time after her daughter's death: and died at Nice, within six months of the period that consigned Louisa to the grave. Before she quitted London she addressed to me a mournful but a kind letter, in which she inclosed the following stanzas, which were found in the desk of my lost and sainted love, and were the last she ever wrote.

THE DYING GIRL TO HER MOTHER.

Oh! lay me not in the dark vault,
But let me rest my weary head
In some sequestered verdant spot,
Where the pale moon her beams can shed.

I love to think 'twill shine upon
The turf that soon will hide this breast,
When I, within the silent grave,
Have found forgetfulness and rest.

And let the flowers I loved so much
Be placed around my humble grave,
For, ah! in quitting this fair earth,
What pleased in life I still would crave.

And yet one other boon I'd ask,
Dear mother; when *He* comes, oh! tell
I dying blessed him—now is past
The bitterness of death—farewell!

Heigh-ho! how melancholy I am—I did not think I had so much feeling left in my heart; I thought it had all centered in my toe, which has lately been the most sensitive part about me. Bless me! what a rueful figure the too faithful mirror opposite to me reflects! the eyes nearly as red as the cheeks, and the nose redder than either. And *this*, is the face that poor dear Louisa delighted to look on! She was right; it is better to die young than to outlive *all* one loved, and *all* that rendered one loveable. She went down to her grave in the bloom of youth and beauty, a ready made angel, wanting only the wings, and she yet exists in my fond memory as she was, young, and oh, how lovely!—while *I* have survived every vestige of good looks, and am almost disposed to rejoice that *she* cannot behold the hideous old man yonder mirror shows me.

How absurd it is to see a red-faced, fat

paunched sexagenarian weeping! Faith, I'm ashamed of myself; so one glance more at that sweet mild countenance, and back that and her hair and letters go to their drawer, in the old escritoire; there to remain until my jackanapes of an heir consigns them to the flames, with, probably sundry laughs at his old uncle, whom he cannot fancy ever having been other than such as he knew him, and unmindful that a day will come when he, too, will be an old man.

## MY SECOND LOVE.

Well, I think I may venture to recount the story of my second love without the fear of becoming lachrymose. No, no! Arabella Wilton, who was its object, never brought a serious thought into my head, unless it was on the folly of mankind in general, and mine in particular, for being so easily made the dupes of such women.

In justice to my fidelity and sensibility, I ought to state, that I sincerely mourned for my poor lost Louisa during two long dreary years; and I was romantic enough to believe that I never could love again; a belief that most persons similarly situated are apt to indulge until experience proves its fallacy.

Here is the portrait of Arabella: the artist has caught the half-imperious, yet winning expression of her sparkling black eyes, which seemed to say, as plain as ever such orbs could speak, "Resist me if you can." What a profusion of raven tresses fall round that oval face! how rich is the sunny tint of her cheek, and the ripe crimson of her lips; lips that never opened except to smile or give utterance to some sprightly *badinage*, whose *malice*, as the French call it, was forgiven in consideration of the beautiful mouth that originated it. Arabella was the very opposite of the gentle Louisa; she commanded, rather than won, her admirers into love, and seemed so certain of their hearts, and gave so little security of yielding hers in exchange, that she kept them (and she had not a little battalion) in a perpetual state of *qui vive*.

The sentiment, if such it might be called, that Arabella inspired, was a much more common *one* than real affection. Her admirers commenced with love for *her*, but ended in love for *themselves;* as she was eminently skilled in wielding that powerful weapon *l'amour propre*, and by its judicious treatment rarely failed to gain an empire over those she wished to influence. The equal encouragement she administered to all whom she desire to enchain, rendered the chase of her heart as exciting as —what shall I say—I have it—a fox chase; if so homely a simile may be allowed to be addressed to so dignified a theme; and like that exciting amusement, vanity creating the desire of surpassing all competitors, furnished the chief charm of the pursuit. Scarcely a day, nay, an hour, elapsed, that each candidate for her favor did not imagine himself the preferred; and did not inwardly smile at the vanity of his slighted rivals, while *she* was secretly laughing at them all, having predetermined to wed the richest, whoever he might be. If I called and found her with only her aunt, she never failed to amuse me with piquant anecdotes illustrative of the *betise* of Lord Henry, or pungent *satire* against Sir John; though her attention to each of these worthies had excited my jealousy the day before. Nay; so adroitly did she point out all the ridiculous defects in their characters manners, and appearance, that she not only quieted my jealous fears, but actually created in me a degree of commiseration for these unhappy wights; though, truth to say, I was never more amused, or more inclined to admire Arabella, than when she was using every weapon in the armory of her wit, in attacking my rivals.

It never for one moment occurred to me, that her hypocrisy, in thus ridiculing those whom she openly encouraged, was reprehensible; or that, probably, she was equally severe in her animadversions on me during my absence. No: vanity, gratified vanity, prevented my discovery of aught, except that *she* was charming, and that *I* must be the preferred, or she would never have thus selected me as the confidant of her real opinion of her admirers. Nay, I am persuaded, that had my best friend informed me that Arabella made *me* the object of her ridicule, I should have disbelieved the assertion; and attributed it to some little feeling of envy or jealousy on the part of the narrator. Such is the confidence vanity gives a man, *not* in the sincerity of his mistress, but in the irresistible power of his own attractions. Lord Henry and Sir John were, nevertheless, the only formidable rivals among the train of her danglers; not that they were superior in either mental or personal attractions to the rest, but simply because they were richer. Lord Henry had lately inherited a very large fortune from an old bachelor uncle, and was consequently considered an excellent *parti;*

and Sir John was in possession of a clear twenty thousand a-year, a possession which in those days, no less than in *these*, rendered the possessor very popular with all ladies who had to give, or were to be given in marriage. Neither of these admirers had as yet asked for Arabella's hand, save for a *contre* dance; and she was skilfully playing them off against each other and me, in order to elicit a demand for her hand for life. Yet, this manœuvre, *I*, in my infinite wisdom, never once suspected; but, vain men (and I confess I was one) ever were, and will be fools to the end of the chapter.

At this epoch, Lord Henry was called away by the illness of his father, and Sir John had taken his departure to attend the Newmarket meeting. The field was consequently left open to me, and I determined on making the best use of my time to bring Arabella to a decision in my favor before the return of my rivals. How delightful, thought I, to witness their mortification and disappointment at my success; and with this laudable motive—and I verily believe it was the predominant, if not the sole one—I looked forward to proposing to enter a state in which the whole happiness or misery of life depends on the selection of the object with whom it is to be shared, and the respect as well as affection entertained for her. Yet, if all about to assume the holy tie of matrimony were to analyse their motives for seeking it, how few would find them stand the test of reason; or how few dare to conjecture the probable duration of the sentiment—if sentiment such fancies may be denominated—that led to it.

But a truce to moralising, and back to my story. On my next visit to Arabella, after the departure of Lord Henry and Sir John, she received me with even more than her usual kindness; congratulated me that I could exist without attending Newmarket, protesting that she held in horror the votaries of the turf, who, she said, seldom possessed as much intelligence as the quadrupeds on whom they betted thousands, and possessed infinitely less sagacity than the bipeds in the shape of grooms, who outwitted them. Severe animadversions on her absent admirers, and implied compliments on my superiority, encouraged me to make her the proposal of my hand. I said all that it is customary to say on such occasions, when a man is, or fancies that he is, enamored; but, while uttering these platitudes, I could not help thinking how different had been my sensations when making a similar declaration to my first love, my gentle, lost Louisa. Nor could I avoid observing, how differently the proposal was received. Here was no tremulous sensibility, no bashful timidity, no tears starting from the downcast lid, and, like a pearly dew-drop, stealing over a cheek of rose. No, her grandmother, had she been alive, could not have been more perfectly unembarrassed; though, after the pause of a few moments, she affected (and even I, infatuated as I was, yet saw it was affectation) to look down, and murmur something about "the unexpectedness of my proposal."

"Then, am I to understand that it is disagreeable to you?" said I, piqued by her want of feeling.

"Disagreeable?" repeated the Syren, "what a word!" and she placed her small white hand in mine, as she turned away her head, to conceal, *not* her blushes, but her *want* of them. I was fool enough to throw myself on my knees before her; by Jove, at this moment, the very thought of such an attitude gives me a twinge in my foot. There again—what a horrible shooting pain—and that blockhead, John, has let the time elapse for bringing me my colchicum.—Here he comes at last—so, that will do, sirrah!

Well, let me remember, where was I when that twinge put it all out of my head—oh! I have it—I was on my knees, kissing the little hand she abandoned to me, and her head averted, probably to hide a smile of either triumph or ridicule, when a loud voice in the ante-room (loud voices in ante-rooms are often convenient) gave me notice that we were about to be interrupted. I had only time to start on my legs, and look nearly as unconcerned as—my lady love, ere her bustling aunt entered the apartment, to announce that a letter had just reached her, requiring their immediate presence at Clifton, where a near relative was dangerously ill. She had sent to order post-horses, and desired her niece to commence preparations for her journey. While *Madame la tante* retired to the ante-room to give orders to her *femme de charge*, Arabella whispered me to write to her aunt, to make my proposal in form.

"Why not make it now, and in person," said I, "and declare our mutual affection and engagement?"

"Oh! no, on no account," replied the deceiver, "you know not how precise and prudish my aunt is," (and that I was utterly ignorant of these features of her character, was very true, for I had never seen

even the most remote symptom of them in the old lady.) "She would never forgive us," pursued Arabella, "if she knew that you had proposed to *me* before you had asked her permission; so pray don't commit me. Write *her* a formal proposal, and name the settlements you intend to make; for though *I*, dear Henry, do not regard such matters, *she*, I blush to say, regards little else (avarice being the besetting sin of the old,) and we must conciliate her."

There was something repugnant to my feelings in all this cold, calculating policy: and yet, fool as I was, I attributed the confidence reposed in me by the niece, relative to her aunt's mercenary disposition, to her affection for me. Thus, are we ever ready to be misled by our vanity!

I left the house with reluctance; and no sooner reached home than I obeyed Arabella's dictates, and wrote the formal proposal; in which, after expressing, with all the exaggeration of sentiment usual to the occasion, my attachment to her niece, I offered settlements so liberal, that not even the most mercenary aunt could have objected to them. I waited impatiently for an answer; for, though sure of Arabella's consent, I wished to have it confirmed by the sanction of one, who stood in the light of a parent and guardian to her. But *no* answer came; and, when I despatched my servant a second time ro demand one, he was informed that the ladies had left town.

Day after day elapsed without bringing me the desired reply from the aunt, whose silence seemed most unaccountable. Various and painful were the reflections it occasioned me, the prominent one being regret for having made the offer; for I now began to feel that, when no longer present to dazzle me by her beauty, or to amuse me by her satirical sallies, Arabella's fascinations were forgotten, and little or no semblance of passion in my breast, reminded me that I had once fancied she was dear to me. I almost wished that the aunt would refuse her consent; though some little feeling of humiliation as to what Lord Henry would say, or Sir John think of me, as a rejected suitor, crossed my mind each time I indulged the vague hope.

At length, after many days of suspense, a letter was brought me from Mrs. Spencer, apologising for not having sooner replied to me; but stating, that the imminent danger of her relative had driven every thought, not connected with him, out of her head; that as he was now convalescent, she turned with pleasure to my proposal, admitted the liberality of the settlement offered, and would be in London in a day or two, when every preliminary for the marriage could be finally arranged.

My feelings on reading this characteristic epistle were any thing but of a joyous nature. It was unaccompanied by a single line, or even message from Arabella; indeed her name did not even once occur in the letter, an omission that both offended and disgusted me.

They arrived in two days, and I almost got rid of my doubts and fears when I saw Arabella, in increased beauty and animation, meet my greetings with unrepressed symptoms of complacency. The arrangements for our marriage were put *en train;* but, with what different feelings did I enter into them, to those which influenced me on the former occasion. Though I still admired Arabella's beauty, and felt her fascination, yet the passion she excited, if passion it might be called, was of a nature that reflected little honor on the inspired or inspirer. It was unrefined by the tenderness that ever accompanies real love, and unredeemed by the respect which hallows that sentiment, and robs it of all *grossierté*. All thoughts connected with my gentle Louisa, even in the heyday of our love, were characterised by a purity that led me to imagine her an angel, sent by mistake into this terrestrial sphere, through whose guidance I might become worthy of Heaven; but Arabella, I looked on as a woman fitted only to chain a man to earth, by her blandishments and personal charms. The two Cupids, Anteros and Eros, described by the ancients as governing the pure and impure passions of love, had presided over my two very different attachments, and their effects on my mind had been obvious. Louisa's influence would have purified any heart where she might have reigned; whereas Arabella's would but have sullied it.

It was at this period that the miniature, now before me, became mine. I had expressed a desire to have a portrait of my intended wife; but, observing that her aunt seemed unaccountably disposed to postpone its being painted until after our marriage, I with the usual pertinacy of my character, determined on having it finished forthwith; and took her to one of the most celebrated of our artists of that epoch, to whom I paid what was then considered an extravagant price. My vanity was not a little mortified by observing that my fu-

ture bride seemed much more occupied by the preparations for her *trousseau* than by the donor of it; and evinced a taste, or rather let me say a passion, for jewels and Cashmeres, which indicated that the organ of acquisitiveness was, as phrenologists would say, very largely developed in her. I was continually told by Mrs. Spencer of the magnificence of the diamonds, and rare beauty of the emeralds, presented by all the men similarly situated with myself to their future brides; Arabella observing that, for her part, she envied not the diamonds of one, or the emeralds of another, but she owned to the soft impeachment of liking rubies and sapphires excessively, and almost looked with envy at those presented by Sir Frederick Vandeleur to her friend, Miss Meadows.

In short, I received many hints of what *I* was *expected* to give, with as many disparaging observations on *what* I *had* given; and I was weak enough to incur considerable expense to gratify the implied wishes of my future wife.

Mrs. Spencer had removed to a villa at Richmond, to which I daily bent my course. I was in the habit of arriving there generally about three o'clock; and had constantly met on my route an extremely good-looking young man, whose fashionable air and dress formed a striking contrast with the wretched looking hack on which he was mounted. I had so repeatedly encountered this equestrian, that his face became familiar to me: and I set it down in my mind, that he was some spoilt son, returning from a daily visit to an exigent mother, or else a lover, returning from a stolen interview with the sultana of some Crœsus of the city, during the absence of the said rich, if not wise man of the East. He seemed to regard me with a certain air of *fierté* and ill-humour, that was unaccountable in a total stranger; except by imagining that he had surmised my suspicions of his erratic visits, and dreaded my being some busybody, who might betray them.

I had been to Rundle and Bridges' one day, selecting jewels, and had far exceeded the sum I intended to expend there; incited to this extravagance, I frankly own, much more by the broad hints of the aunt, and implied, rather than expressed desires of her niece, than by any spontaneous generosity. Lured by the beauty of the trinkets, and their "appropriateness to each other," as the bowing shopman observed, I was rash enough to conclude my purchases by a necklace of rubies, set in diamonds, requiring ear-rings, brooches, head ornaments, and bracelets, *en suite*.

Thus, instead of the few hundreds I had intended to disburse, I found, on a hasty and reluctant retrospect of my expenditure, that I must have dissipated some thousands; and I consequently returned from Ludgate-hill, feeling that species of self-dissatisfaction and ill-humor which a man, who is not quite a fool, never fails to experience when he has consciously committed a folly. In this state of mind I entered my club, to dine; when, not wishing to encounter any of my acquaintances, I ensconced myself in a corner of the large room, and had an Indian screen of vast dimensions, so placed, that I was isolated from the general mass, and could not be seen by any new-comers.

While I was discussing my solitary repast, I heard voices, familiar to my ear, command dinner to be brought to them at the table next to mine, and only divided from me by the screen. When I recognised the tones of Lord Henry and Sir John, for whose vicinity at that period I felt no peculiar desire, I congratulated myself on the precaution which had induced me to use this barrier.

"When did you come to town?" asked Lord Henry.

"I only arrived an hour ago," was the reply.

"I came late last night, and am on my way to Avonmore's."

"Have you heard that our pretty friend, Arabella Wilton, is going to be married? and to Lyster too?"

"*Est il possible?*"

"Yes, positively to Lyster, whom we have heard her abuse and ridicule a thousand times."

I felt my ears begin to tingle, and verified the truth of the old proverb, "Listeners never hear good of themselves."

"By the by, *you* were a little smitten there, and at one time I began to think you had serious intentions, as they call it—Eh! Sir John?"

"Why, so Arabella took it into her wise head to fancy too; but, I was not quite so young as all that. No, no, Arabella is a devilish nice girl to flirt with; but, the last, the very last, I would think of as a wife."

Now, there I differ from you; for, she is precisely the sort of person I should think of *as a wife*."

"You don't say so?"

"Yes, I do; but then, it must be as the wife of another; and, when she is so, I

intend to be—one of her most assiduous admirers."

I felt my blood boil with indignation; and was on the point of discovering my proximity to the speakers, when Sir John resumed.

"What a flat Lyster must be, to be gulled into marrying her. I never thought they could have succeeded in deceiving him to such an extent, though I saw they were playing us off against the poor devil."

"Oh! by Jove, so did I too; and if our *supposed* matrimonial projects led to his *real* one, I don't regret it, for poor Arabella's sake; for she was most impatient to change her name."

"Only think of the aunt's sending me Lyster's letter of proposal."

"Capital, capital, the plot thickens; for she also sent it to me."

"You don't say so?"

"I swear she did; and what is more, I can give you chapter and verse; for Lyster was so matter-of-fact in detailing his readiness to make liberal settlements, and liberal they certainly were, that I remember nearly the words of his letter to *Madame la tante*."

"And what reason did the old she fox assign for consulting you on the subject?"

"The old one, to be sure; of considering me as a friend to the family."

"Exactly the same reason she gave for consulting me."

"She stated to me that Arabella had a positive dislike to Mr. Lyster; and she feared (mark the cunning of the old woman) that this dislike to so unexceptionable *a parti* originated in her having a preference elsewhere; and therefore *she* had determined to ask my opinion whether she ought to influence her niece to accept Lyster."

"In short, a round-about way of soliciting you to propose for Arabella yourself. The exact sense of her letter to me."

"I dare be sworn they were fac-similes. *Madame la tante* added, that her niece was by no means committed with Mr. Lyster; for, that she had been so guarded when he asked her (on observing her coldness) if his proposal was disagreeable to her, as merely to repeat, with a shudder, the word he had uttered—disagreeable."

Well did I recollect this circumstance, trifling as it was; and overpowering were the sensations of anger and mortified vanity that oppressed me on recalling it to memory!

"Well," resumed Lord Henry, "so you wrote, as did I, to advise by all means that Mr. Lyster should be accepted?"

"Yes, precisely; for I thought it the most prudent advice from 'a friend of the family'—ha! ha! ha!—for the soul of me I can't help laughing!"

"Ha! ha! ha! nor I neither. *Both* of us consulted, and from the same motive."

"It's capital, and worthy of the old lady, who has as much cunning, and as little heart, as any dowager in the purlieus of St. James's."

"I'll lay an even wager that we twain were not the only single men consulted on the occasion."

"For my part, I should not wonder if the letters had been circular: ha! ha!"

"And how simple Lyster must be; for while the aunt was sending round his proposal to all the admirers of her niece, *he* must have been impatiently waiting for her answer."

"Luckless devil! I pity him;" (Oh! how I writhed!) "he has been atrociously taken in: yet I am glad that poor Arabella has at last secured a good establishment; for, I confess I have a *faiblesse* for her. Indeed, to say the truth, I should have been ungrateful if I had not; for I believe—in fact, I have reason to know, that the preference to which the old aunt alluded, had more truth in it than *she* imagined."

"So *I* suspect, too; for, without vanity, I may own, that I believe the poor girl had a *penchant* for your humble servant."

"For you?"

"Yes, for me. Is there any thing so *very* extraordinary in her liking me, that you look so surprised and incredulous?"

"Why, yes, there is something devilishly extraordinary; for, if I might credit Arabella's *own* assertion, her *penchant* was quite in a different quarter."

"You don't mean to say it was for *you?*"

"And what if I did? Is there any thing more astonishing in her feeling a preference for *me*, than for *you?*"

"*I* merely suppose that she could not have a *penchant* for us both at the same time; and I have had reason, and very satisfactory reason too, to be satisfied that she liked me."

"And *I* can swear that I have heard her ridicule you in your absence, until I have been compelled to take your part; though she often made me laugh, the dear creature did it so cleverly. Ha! ha! ha! the recollection makes me laugh even now."

"And *I* have heard her attack you with

such acrimony that even an enemy must have allowed that her portrait of you was caricatured; and yet there was so much drollery in her manner of showing you up, that it was impossible to resist laughing. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Lord Henry, I beg to inform you that I allow no man to laugh at my expense."

"Permit me to tell you, Sir John, that I ask no man's permission to laugh when I am so disposed."

"Am I to consider that you mean to be personal?"

"You are perfectly at liberty to consider what you please."

"My friend shall call on you to-morrow morning to name a place for our meeting."

"I shall be quite ready to receive him."

And *exit* Lord Henry, followed, in a few minutes, by Sir John.

"And so," thought I, "here are two vain fools about to try to blow each other's brains out for a heartless coquette; and a third, perhaps the greatest fool of the three, was on the point of making her his wife. What an escape have I had! No, no, never will I marry her. She may bring an action against me for breach of promise —and she or her aunt are quite capable of such a proceeding—but be united to her I never will. Ridicule and abuse *me*, indeed! Oh, the hypocrite! And to think of all the tender speeches and loving insinuations she has lavished on me; the delicate flattery and implied deference to my opinions! Oh! woman! woman! all that has ever been said, written, or imagined against you, is not half severe enough. You are all alike, worthless and designing."

As I finished this wise and temperate soliloquy, writhing under the wounds inflicted on my *amour propre*, the gentle image of my lost Louisa seemed to reproach me for this unmanly satire against her sex. A thousand proofs of her angelic purity and sweet simplicity of character, arose to my memory; and I felt ashamed of my injustice in thus heaping obloquy on a whole sex merely because *I* had possessed so little discrimination as to have chosen one of the most unworthy of it.

I passed a sleepless night, yet I was relieved by thinking I was now saved from becoming the husband of Arabella. I felt rebuked when I recollected how frequently the artful syren had excited my merriment by her ridicule and abuse of her other admirers. *We* had all been, as it now appeared, laughing at each other, while *she* had been mocking us *en masse:* but, like vain blockheads as we were, we never suspected that we were each in turn alike the object of her ridicule: she having had the perception to discover, that her most certain mode of acquiring an influence over the minds of her admirers, was to gratify their vanity by abusing their competitors.

I set out, at an unusually early hour, for Richmond, determined to come to an explanation with both aunt and niece; and, shall I own it, anticipating, with a childish pleasure, their rage and disappointment at my breaking off the marriage. On arriving at the villa, I was informed that Mrs. Spencer had not yet left her chamber, and that Miss Wilton was in the garden. To the garden then I hied me, anxious to overwhelm her with the sarcastic reproaches I had conned over in my mind.

While advancing along a gravel walk, divided by a hedge from a sequestered lane, I heard the neighing and tramping of a horse; and, on looking over the hedge, discovered the lean steed on which I had so frequently encountered the good-looking Unknown on the road to Richmond. The poor animal was voraciously devouring the leaves of the hedge, his bridle being fastened to the stem of an old tree. A vague notion that the owner, who could not be far off, was now holding a parley with my deceitful mistress, instantly occurred to me, and seemed to account for his frequent visits to Richmond. I moved on with stealthy steps, towards a small pavilion at the far end of the garden, where I correctly concluded Arabella to be; and whence, I soon heard the sound of voices, as I concealed myself beneath the spreading branches of a large laurestinas, close to the window. I will not attempt to defend my listening, because I admit the action to be on all occasions indefensible; but the impulse to it was irresistible.

"Is it not enough," exclaimed Arabella, "that I am compelled to marry a man who is hateful to me, while my whole soul is devoted to you, but that you thus torment me with your ill-founded jealousy?"

"How can I refrain from being jealous," was the rejoinder, "when I know that you will soon be another's! Oh, Arabella! if I were indeed convinced that you hated him, I should be less wretched."

"How amiable and unselfish," thought I. "He wishes the woman he professes to love, to be that most miserable of human beings, the wife of a man who is hateful

to her, that *he*, forsooth, may be less unhappy; and he has the unblushing effrontery to avow the detestable sentiment."

"How can you doubt my hating him?" asked my syren in a wheedling tone. "Can you *look* at *him*, and then regard *yourself* in a mirror, without being convinced, that no one who has eyes to see, or a heart to feel, could ever behold the one without disgust, or the other without admiration?"

"Oh, the cockatrice," thought I; "and *this* after all the flatteries she poured into my too credulous ear."

Listeners beware, for ye are doomed never to hear good of yourselves. So certain is the crime of listening to carry its own punishment, that there is no positive prohibition against it: we are commanded not to commit other sins, but this one draws down its own correction, and wo be to him who infringes it.

The speech of Arabella, which, I acknowledge, enraged me exceedingly, had a most soothing effect on my rival; for I heard sundry kisses bestowed, as I hope, for propriety's sake, on the hand of the fair flatterer.

"Yes," resumed she, "Lyster is a perfect fright, and so *gauche*, that positively he can neither sit, stand, nor walk, like anybody else."

Oh! the traiteress! how often had she commended my air *degagé*, and the manly grace, as she styled it, of my movements. After this, who ought ever again to believe in the honied adulation of a woman?

"Now, I must disagree with you, Arabella," said my rival (and I felt a sudden liking to him as I listened), "Lyster is a devilish good-looking fellow (I thought as much); one whom any woman whose affections were not previously engaged, might fancy."

"Let us not talk or think of him, I entreat you," said Arabella; "it is quite punishment enough for me to be obliged to *see* and *hear him* half the day, without your occupying the short time we are together in a conversation respecting a person so wholly uninteresting. Have I not refused Lord Henry and Sir John to please you? yet you will not be content, do what I will."

"Oh, Arabella! how can you expect me to be otherwise than discontented, than wretched, when I reflect that your destiny depends not on me, and that another will be the master of your fate. *He* may be harsh, unkind: and *I* who love, who adore you, cannot shield you from many hours of recrimination, when he discovers, and discover he must, that in wedding him you gave not your heart with your hand."

"Oh, leave that all to me to manage," said the crafty creature. "*He* is so vain and so *bête*, that it requires no artifice on my part to make him believe that I married him from motives of pure preference. He is persuaded of it; for what will not vanity like his believe?"

"By flattery; yes, by deception and flattery—I see it all, Arabella—you have acquired an empire over Lyster by that well-known road to a man's heart, the making him believe that you love him. Had you loved *me* you would not, you could not, have been guilty of this deception; and in thus deceiving him you have," (and the poor young man's voice trembled with emotion) "wounded me to the soul."

"You really are the most wrong-headed person in the world," said his deceitful companion. "Here am I, ready to sacrifice myself to a rich marriage to save *you*, Edward, from a poor one; for to marry a portionless girl like me would be your ruin, and I love you too well, ungrateful as you are, to bring this misery upon you. When you come as a visitor to my house, and see me in the possession of comforts and luxuries *you* could not give me, you will rejoice in the prudence, ay, and generosity too, that gave me courage to save you from a poor and wretched home, for wretched all poverty-stricken homes must be."

"And could you think my affection so light, Arabella," replied her lover, impatiently, "as to believe that I could go to *his* house and see *him* in possession of the only woman I ever loved? No! I am neither heartless nor *philosophical* enough to bear this. Such a position would drive me mad."

"Then, what am I to think, what am I to make of you?"

"Not a villain! a mean, base villain, who betrays hospitality, and consents that the woman he loves shall pursue a conduct at once the most vile, deceitful, and dishonorable!" and he positively wept. His passionate grief seemed to touch even the marble heart of his callous mistress; for, she gently asked him, why he had ever appeared to agree to her wedding another."

"Can you ask me?" replied he. "I knew you to be fond of luxury and display, which, alas! my limited fortune could never bestow. I feared, trembled at the idea of beholding you pining for the enjoyments *I* could not afford; and it seemed

to me less wretched to know you in the full possession of them with another than lamenting their privation with me. It was for *you*, Arabella, conscious as you are how fondly, how madly, I dote on you, to offer to share my poverty, and not for me to compel you to it. Had you really loved me, this course you would have pursued."

"But, I tell you, I do love you; and will prove my truth by following your wishes, if you will but express them," said Arabella, melted by his grief and tenderness.

"If you really *do* love me, why may not a modest competence content you? I would have you break off this hateful marriage, and accept love in a cottage with me. My grandmother would soon forgive our stolen union, for she likes me so well that she would quickly learn to like *her* who made my happiness. But, alas! even she, good and indulgent as she is, has often told me that *you* were as little disposed to marry a poor man, as your aunt could be to give you to such a husband."

"It was very uncivil of your grandmother to say so, and still more so of you to repeat it. But bless me (touching a repeater I had given her a few days before,) how late it is! Lyster will be here almost immediately; and if he should find you" ——

"Your marriage with him would be broken off. Yes, I will leave you, Arabella; and meet this happy man whose wealth has won you from me. Oh! how I have loathed his face of contentment, as I have passed him on the road and thought that *he* was privileged to approach you; while *I* must seek you, by stealth, and leave you to make room for him. I can bear this no longer, Arabella; you see me now for the last time, unless you accept me for your husband."

And, so saying, he rushed from her presence, mounted his lean steed, and was heard galloping along with a speed that indicated the troubled state of his mind.

"Poor Edward!" exclaimed Arabella, "heigh ho! I wish he were rich, for I *do* like him better than I ever liked any one else. And *he*, too, is the only one of all my admirers who loves me for myself; the *rest* but love me for my flattery. Lord Henry, Sir John, ay, even this dolt who is about to wed me, all have been fascinated, not by my beauty (and for this I loathed them,) but by my flattery. By *this*, I have charmed, by *this* I have won a husband. Poor Edward, it was not so with him; but love in a cottage—I hate cottages—and then (in a few years) to see it filled with a set of little troublesome brats, and hear them screaming for bread and butter! No, no, these hands 'looking at them' were never formed to cut bread and butter, like Werter's *Lolotte*; or to make pinafores, like good Mrs. Herbert, the wife of the half-pay captain, in the little cottage down the lane."

"And yet they might be worse employed, fair lady," exclaimed I, vaulting into the room.

Arabella uttered a faint shriek, turned to a death-like paleness, and then became suffused with the crimson blushes of shame.

"I have witnessed your stolen interview with my favored rival; rival no longer, for here I resign all pretensions to your hand."

She attempted to utter some defence, but I was not in a humor to listen to what lengths her duplicity and desire for a rich husband might lead her; so, *sans ceremonie*, I interrupted her by saying, that what I had witnessed and heard, had produced no change in my previously formed resolution of breaking off the marriage. She sank into a chair; and even I pitied her confusion and chagrin, until I recollected her comments on my "*gaucherie*," and the polite epithet of "a perfect fright," with which she had only a few minutes before honored me. I can *now* smile at the mortification my vanity *then* suffered; but at the time, it was no laughing matter with me.

I left Arabella to her meditations, which, I dare be sworn, were none of the most agreeable; and returned to the house to seek an interview with her aunt. That sapient lady met me, as was her wont, with smiles on her lips, and soft words falling from them.

"Look here, *dear* Mr. Lyster," said she, holding out an ecrin towards me, "did you ever see any thing so beautiful as these rubies set in diamonds? Are they not the very things for our beloved Arabella? How well they would show in her dark hair; and how perfectly they would suit the rich, warm tint of her cheeks and lips. None but brilliant brunettes should ever wear rubies. Are you not of my opinion; and do you not think that this *parure* seems made for our sweet Arabella?"

I mastered myself sufficiently to assent with calmness to her observations, when she immediately resumed: "Oh, I *knew you* would agree with me, our tastes are

so exactly alike. I was sure, my *dear* Mr. Lyster, you would at once select this in preference to emeralds or sapphires, which suit *fade*, blonde beauties better; but for our sparkling Arabella, rubies and diamonds are the thing. Yet, how grave you look; bless me! what *is* the matter? Perhaps, after all, *you* do *not* like rubies and diamonds; and in that case, though (*entre nous*) I *know* that our darling Arabella dotes on them, I am sure she would prefer having only the ornaments which *you* like, for she is the most tractable creature in the world, as you must have observed. So, confess the truth, you do *not* admire this *parure?*"

"Why, the truth is," said I, taking a spiteful pleasure in raising her expectations, that her disappointment might be the greater, "I yesterday bought at Rundle and Brydges', a *parure* of rubies and diamonds more than twice the size of the one before me, and set in the best taste"—alluding to the very purchase for which I had been blaming myself, when I overheard the dialogue between Lord Henry and Sir John.

"Oh! you dear, kind, generous creature, how good of you! How delighted our sweet Arabella will be. Have you brought it with you? I am positively dying with impatience to see it."

"Then, I fear, madam," replied I, with sternness, "that your curiosity will never be gratified."

"Why, what a strange humor *you* are in, my *dear* Mr. Lyster—nephew, I was going to call you; but I shan't give you that affectionate appellation while you are so odd and so cross. And why am I not to see them, pray? Surely you do not intend to prevent my associating with my sweet child when she becomes your wife? No, you never could be so cruel." And the old hypocrite laid her hand on my arm in her most fawning manner.

"I have no intention, madam, of separating two persons who seem so peculiarly formed for each other."

"Good creature! How kind of you, *dear* Mr. Lyster; how happy you have made me; I felt so wretched at the thoughts of our sweet Arabella's being taken from me, for I have ever looked on her as if she were my own child. How considerate of you not to separate us. I am sure *she* will be delighted; and *I* shall be the happiest person in the world to give up the cares and trouble of an establishment of my own, which, at my advanced age, and deprived of Arabella, would be insupportable. Believe me, most cheerfully, nay, gladly, I shall avail myself of your kind offer, and fix myself with you, and my affectionate child."

The old lady was so delighted at the thought of this plan, that she made more than one attempt to embrace her dear nephew, as she now called me, and it was some minutes before I could silence her joyful loquacity; during which time, I will candidly own, I had a malicious pleasure in anticipating the bitter disappointment that awaited her. When, at length, she had exhausted her ejaculations of delight, I thus sternly addressed her:—

"When I declared my intention, madam, of not separating you and your niece, I did not mean to ask *you* to become a member of my family. I simply meant to state that I did not intend depriving you of the advantage of *her* society, as I have determined on not marrying her.

"Good heavens! what do I hear?" exclaimed Mrs. Spencer. "What *do* you, what *can* you mean, Mr. Lyster? It is cruel thus to try my feelings; you have quite shocked me; I—I—am far from well."

And her changeful hue denoted the truth of the assertion.

"Let it suffice to say, madam, that I last evening heard Lord Henry and Sir John declare the extraordinary confidence you had reposed in them; that you had not only sent to each, my letter of proposal to your niece, but betrayed to them her more than indifference towards me, and the very words in which she expressed herself, when I made her the offer of my hand."

"How base, how unworthy of Lord Henry and Sir John," said Mrs. Spencer, forgetting all her usual craft, in the surprise and irritation caused by this information. "Never was there such shameful conduct."

"You are right, madam," replied I, "the conduct practised on this occasion has been indeed shameful; luckily for *me*, the discovery of it has not been too late."

"If you are so dishonorable as not to fulfil your engagement," said the old lady, her cheeks glowing with anger, and her eyes flashing fury, "be assured that I will instruct my lawyer to commence proceedings against you, for a breach of promise of marriage; for, I have no notion of letting my injured niece sit quietly down, a victim to such monstrous conduct."

"I leave you, madam," replied I, "to pursue whatever plan you deem most fitting, to redress *her* grievances, and blazon forth to the world, your own *delicate* part

in the Comedy of Errors; the *denouement* of which is not precisely what you could have wished. However, as comedies should always end in marriage, let me advise you to seek a substitute for your humble servant."

Then bowing low to my intended aunt, I left her presence for ever; and returned to London with a sense of redeemed freedom that gave a lightness to my spirits to which they had been a stranger, ever since the ill-omened hour of my proposal to Arabella.

Of all the presents that had found their way to the villa, and they were not, "like angel visits, few, and far between," but many and costly, not one except my portrait was ever returned. I retained that of Arabella: not out of love, heaven knows, but because I wished to preserve a memento of the folly of being caught by mere beauty; and as it had cost me a considerable sum, I thought myself privileged to keep it, as a specimen of *art*.

Lord Henry and Sir John fought a duel, the day after their altercation at the Club, in which the first was mortally wounded; and the latter consequently compelled to fly to the Continent.

In a week from the period of my last interview with Arabella, and her aunt, the newspapers were filled with accounts of the elopement of the beautiful and fashionable Miss Wilton with Lieutenant Rodney of the Guards. It was stated that the young lady had been on the eve of marriage with the rich Mr. L. of L. Park, but that Cupid had triumphed over Plutus; and the disinterested beauty had preferred love in a cottage with Lieut. Rodney, to sharing the immense wealth of her rejected suitor, who was said to wear the willow with all due sorrow.

The grandmother of the new Benedict showed to half a dozen of her most intimate friends, the letter written by him to announce to her, that his "adored Arabella had broken through all her engagements with Mr. Lyster, the *rich* Mr. Lyster, for him." The half dozen intimate friends repeated it, as in duty bound, to half a hundred of their intimate friends, who sent it forth to the world with all the additions that the imagination of each could suggest. Arabella was pitied, praised, or blamed, by turns: and I was represented as a heartless brute, who, knowing that her affections were engaged to another, had, aided by her mercenary aunt, tried to force this model of disinterested love and constancy into a marriage.

Two years after her union, Arabella eloped with a young nobleman remarkable for weak intellect and large fortune; leaving her betrayed husband deeply embarrassed by her extravagance, and with an infant daughter to bear through life, the stigma entailed on her by a mother's guilt. Subsequently to the event, I had it in my power to render a signal service to Mr. Rodney; and it gratified me to do so, as I had never forgotten his good-natured defence of my person against the attack of his hypocritical wife. This unprincipled woman was soon deserted by her lover for some fairer face; and having dragged on a miserable existence of sin and shame for a few years, died unmourned, in poverty and disgrace.

## MY THIRD LOVE.

The treatment I had experienced from the faithless Arabella influenced my conduct long after I had ceased to remember her; and its effects were baleful. Disgusted with the thoughts of marriage, I turned my attenion to flirtations with married women, that most demoralising of all fashionable follies, if what so frequently leads to crimes of a deep die may be so lightly named; and strange to say, rarely were my attentions repulsed, even by those who would have shuddered at vice, could they have beheld it devoid of the blandishments with which sophistry, false sentiment and meretricious refinement delight to adorn it. No, women, whose principles might successfully combat the assaults of vicious passion, too frequently, by the levity with which they permit, if not encourage flirtations, lead the world to form the most injurious conclusions; and while their reputations are the sport of scandal, console themselves with the futile reasoning, that, as they have not incurred actual guilt, they have naught with which they need to reproach themselves.

This species of folly is unknown on the Continent, where, though the women are much less virtuous than our own, a greater degree of external decorum, and respect for appearances, exists. They, while too frequently violating virtue, pay it the homage of assuming its outward decencies; a species of artifice which the great majority of our females, satisfied with not outraging the reality, totally disregard.

I know this assertion, as to the superior appearance of outward decorum in con-

tinental ladies, will be cavilled at; but, the cavillers will be confined to those who have not had personal opportunities of judging, and I beg it may be remembered I am referring to the semblance, and not to the reality of virtue.

Will my readers forgive this digression? I warned them, at the commencement of my confessions, that I was given to digress; and alas! age does not diminish this failing. The truth is, I have much to say of all I saw and experienced during the interval of my breaking off with Arabella, and forming another attachment. Yet, as the confession might compromise others, never shall the veil, that covers the errors of those who smiled on me, be removed by *my* hand: and never *shall* the granddaughters of the present generation, have the blush of shame brought to their cheeks by my recital of the failings of their fair but frail grandmothers, many of whom resembled the spears of Achilles, which if it made wounds, was ready to heal them.

Let my readers then imagine, that two years were passed in the vortex of fashion; that I was by turns a victim, or a dupe, to the passions that mislead men in that maze of folly; and that such were its debasing effects, I learned to view vice without disgust, and to consider virtue a phantom.

It was at this period, that I first encountered the beautiful Lady Mary Vernon, ay, there is her portrait; yet, exquisitely lovely as it is, how far short does it fall of the original, when I first beheld her. There are her soft, melancholy eyes, that seemed as if they were only made to look at the heavens, so sublime, yet chastened, is their expression. There is her lofty and expansive forehead; never had intellect a fairer throne; and those gently curved raven brows, that lent such a character of pensiveness to her face. How beautiful was the almost transparent paleness of her cheek, the paleness of high thought, not disease. Yes, Lady Mary's was a countenance, once seen never to be forgotten: it was the face we picture to ourselves of a saint, rather than that of an angel, for it denoted that she had known suffering and sorrow; though purity shone so conspicuously in its every lineament, that no one could behold her, without a conviction that hers was a spotless mind.

It was at the Duchess of D———'s that I first met her; and, though accustomed to see beauty in all its forms, hers made such an impression on me, that I could scarcely withdraw my eyes from her face. Lady C. asked and obtained permission to present me; and I approached her, internally hoping, with my accustomed vanity, that I might soon discover the art of thawing the frozen coldness of her looks. Her voice was low, yet distinct and harmonious, beyond any voice I had ever heard; and who is insensible to this powerful attraction in a female? an attraction that frequently atones for the want of all others. She looked full in the face of the person she addressed, with an expression of such calmness and purity, that the most reckless libertine could not have hazarded a light word, or indulged a gross thought, in her presence. The men approached her with an air of reverential deference; and even the women, the most remarkable for their levity, assumed a decorous reserve, as if rebuked by the dignified modesty of her demeanor. Such was the respect with which she soon inspired me, that I felt discomposed at seeing some of my female acquaintances, whose purity I had reason to doubt, address her; it seemed to me as if the very atmosphere she breathed, ought not to have been profaned by their presence.

I should have judged her manner to me as being cold and reserved, beyond even the general reserve adopted towards a stranger, had I not observed that it was equally so to all the other men who addressed her; except a certain old white haired admiral, whose visage resembled a frosted saffron cake, to whom she extended her hand, with a cordiality that formed a striking contrast to her coldness towards all the others of his sex. My female acquaintances were not slow at discovering the profound admiration with which Lady Mary inspired me; and many and bitter were the sarcasms with which they commented on it. One said, that she was a tiresome prude, who threw a constraint over every circle into which she came; another observed, that it was no wonder her husband avoided her, for she was too good to be agreeable; and a third remarked, that, notwithstanding her extreme prudery and frigidity, she did not dislike admiration. My respect for the ladies, who thus censured Lady Mary, had long vanished; but now, I positively detested them.

Anxious to discover something of the history of my idol, for, even already, she was enshrined as such in my heart, I asked a dowager of my acquaintance, not more esteemed for her frankness, though it sometimes degenerated into *brusquerie*, than beloved for her goodness of heart,

who was Lady Mary; adding, that it was strange I never heard of her before.

"It would have been more strange if you had," replied she, "for Lady Mary Vernon is not a woman who is talked about. Nothing can be said of her, except that her mind and life are as faultless as her beauty; and such women are seldom much discussed in society. She is the daughter of the Duke of A., and the wife of Mr. Vernon, one of the richest commoners in England."

"He may well be considered an object of envy in possessing such a wife," said I.

"So thinks not *he*," resumed the dowager; "at least, if we may judge by his conduct; for, he totally neglects this lovely creature, and bestows all his time, and, scandalous people say, most of his money too, on a certain lady, whose bad conduct is no longer apocryphal, though she is still tolerated in society. But Mr. Vernon," continued the old lady, "resembles most of you men, who are more prone to admire a meretricious beauty, with whom you are perfectly at your ease, than a woman of refinement and dignified manners; who neither flatters your vanity by her *words*, nor permits you to mislead the world into false conclusions by her *actions*. Half your sex run after a woman, *not* because you individually admire her, but because it gratifies your inordinate *amour propre*, to appear preferred by one, who has a train of adorers; though this very circumstance ought to create any sentiment but admiration, as it clearly implies an unpardonable levity, if no worse, on the part of the lady. See Mrs. Mortimer, the woman Mr. Vernon prefers to his wife—for the fact is so well known, and the lady takes so little pains ro disguise it, that I may name her without being considered censorious—well, see this woman enter a ball-room, or a rout, and she will excite what is called a sensation. Men will crowd round and follow her, the herd will believe that this public homage is a proof of her charms, a belief in which the poor weak, vain, woman will also indulge; while Lady Mary Vernon, whose beauty admits not of a doubt, is neither tumultuously surrounded nor ostentatiously followed by your sex, for the very best reason, no one dare presume to affect familiarity with her. Yet many of you, and probably her foolish husband amongst the number, conclude that the followed lady must be the more captivating; and urged by vanity, increase the crowd of her admirers."

I endeavored to deprecate the severity of the dowager against my sex; and then asked, how long Lady Mary had been married, and if hers had been what is called a love match.

"Yes, quite a love match on both sides; and it is said that, though her husband's attachment survived not the first year of their union, hers still exists in all its pristine force."

"How strange," replied I, "that he could cease to love a woman, whose personal attractions are, as your ladyship affirms, nearly equalled by her mental ones."

"Not at all strange," she rejoined, "if one reflects on the selfishness, the frivolity, and the imbecility of the generality of our men of fashion. Attracted by the beauty of a woman, as they are by that of a horse, a picture, a statue, or any other object, the possession of which is likely to excite the envy of their acquaintances, they eagerly seek to attain it. The novelty worn off, what remains? Incapable of appreciating the mental qualifications of their wives, or of feeling the thousand nameless charms that exist in the sacred union of congenial sentiments, and the endearing ties of habit, which in well regulated minds and warm hearts, 'render the wife dearer than the bride;' the heartless voluptuary of modern days turns from the beauty he has won, to seek, *not* a fairer, but a newer, face; leaving the disappointed, and often wretched wife, to weep over his neglect, or to resent it to her own undoing. His club, the gaming table, Newmarket, and field sports, occupy his time so much, as to leave little, if any of it, to bestow on her, he had chosen, 'for better and for worse, in sickness and in health:' and she has reason to be thankful if, in addition to neglect, he does not give her the mortification of *seeing* or *hearing* of his preference for another, that other, too frequently, one of the most worthless of her sex."

"Is Lady Mary Vernon aware of her husband's *liaison* with Mrs. Mortimer?" asked I.

"How could she remain ignorant of it;" replied the *brusque* dowager, "with half a hundred *kind* friends to irritate her lacerated heart by their insulting pity; or to pique her pride by unavailing attempts to comfort her? In all the trials of life, but more especially in trials of the heart, be assured that there is nothing like a friend for envenoming the wounds. I am an old woman, Mr. Lyster, have seen much, perhaps too much, of the world, and its

knowledge has convinced me, that no persons so closely resemble *enemies* as friends; the only difference between them is, that the *first* injure without any attempt to impose on you by an assumption of good will; while the *second* inflict a deeper injury, professing, like the surgeon who probes his patient's wound, that it is for his good.

"No, poor Lady Mary has too many *friends*, to be left in blissful ignorance of the evil doings of her husband.—Anonymous letters, 'prating of his whereabouts,' were poured in on her; she was advised by one friend to separate from him; by another, to divorce him; *and* by *all*, to adopt some decided line of conduct that would make him ashamed of himself. This last advice she has, *I* think, judiciously followed; while *they* partly in disgust at her forbearance, and still more at her rejection of their interference, rail at her want of spirit, shrug their shoulders, shake their heads, and now suffer her to pursue her own course without further opposition, saying that for so tame spirited a woman there is nothing to be done."

"What then is the course that she has adopted?" inquired I.

"The only course a sensible woman, who loves, and wishes to reclaim her husband, can adopt," answered the dowager. "She treats him with invariable gentleness; makes him no reproaches; hides her tears, and welcomes him to his home, whenever he returns to it."

How well did this account of her conduct accord with the mild and beautiful countenance of Lady Mary! I almost loved my loquacious dowager for being able to appreciate her, and listened with a breathless interest to every word that fell from her lips.

"There, there; just entering the room, is Mr. Vernon," resumed Lady Glanmire, "speak of the evil one and he appears.—How self-satisfied he looks; it positively makes me angry to see him!"

My eyes followed the direction pointed out by Lady G., and encountered a singularly handsome man. I turned to observe Lady Mary, whose cheeks assumed as deep a blush on seeing him, as probably his first declaration of love to her had elicited. He either did not, or would not observe her; at least, he betrayed no symptom of recognition, but seemed sedulously searching for some more attractive object. In a few minutes his countenance brightened, and he approached the celebrated Mrs. Mortimer. I looked again at Lady Mary, and never shall I forget the expression of her face. It had become of a marble paleness; her brows were contracted, as if some violent, but subdued pang, tortured her; and her lips were compressed, as if to restrain the utterance of her anguish. I expected to see her faint; but I knew not then what woman *can* bear; I knew not that fine union of exquisite sensibility and modesty, which calls up fortitude to guard both from exposure to the crowd. Lady Mary looked the very personification of a martyr, about to suffer in support of her faith, as she slowly retired from the room, to avoid seeing her husband lavish on another, those attentions which he had long ceased to bestow on her. How I hated him at the moment! and how I despised the worthless woman, who seemed to occupy all his thoughts. Heavens! what a contrast did her meretricious beauty, and the coarse gaiety of her manner, present to the classical loveliness, and dignified demeanor of Lady Mary!

I sauntered up towards the sofa, on which Mrs. Mortimer and her lover had seated themselves, evidently as little restrained in their flirtation, by the presence of the crowd around them, as if they had been alone. For a flirtation, however, there is certainly no place like a crowded rout. Oh! the things I have seen and heard therein, without any one appearing either surprised or shocked!! Mrs. Mortimer was considered the Calypso of her day; but her charms being now considerably on the wane, she tried to repair them much on the same principle, and with much the same effect, that experienced dealers adopt in their restoration of old pictures. Still she was, and particularly by candle-light, a fine, or what artists call, a picturesque woman; and for the peculiar character of her beauty, might have served as a good model for a painter, wishing to portray the unchaste wife of Potiphar. Her large bold eyes met those of her lover, for such it was plain he was, with an expression, from which I turned with loathing; and her ungloved hand was suffered to rest in his, beneath the folds of her India shawl, which was conveniently draped to conceal this violation of decency. I felt my anger and indignation excited by their undisguised, and disgusting freedom of manner, in presence of one of the most fashionable circles in London; a circle in which their relative position seemed to be as perfectly understood, as, I regret to add, perfectly tolerated: and I left the apart-

ment, sick at heart, and out of humor with the world.

In the ante-room I found Lady Mary Vernon waiting for her carriage; and as the groom of the chambers at that moment announced it, I offered my arm to conduct her to it. For my soul I could not force my lips to utter a single one of the common-place phrases, men address to women on similar occasions; but, feeling her arm tremble within mine, I ventured to observe, that I feared she was ill.

"Very slightly so;" was the answer. "The sudden transition from a heated room to the cold air, often produces a nervous trembling of my frame that quickly subsides."

I handed her to her carriage and saw it drive off, scarcely aware that I was standing uncovered at the bottom of the steps at ——— House, and only remembering that her arm had rested within mine, that my hand had touched hers;—and never had the touch of mortal produced such a sensation on man! No, none but a pure minded and chaste woman could excite such sensations. There was awe mingled with the passionate love, the exquisite pleasure, that sent the blood tingling through my veins: and I mentally vowed that no man should ever have the arm of my wife within his, if wife I ever had, I longed to press my lips on the sleeve on which her beautiful hand had rested. I thought of her as some bright vision; and the melting tones of her voice still sounded in my ear. I felt something soft under my foot; and, on looking, perceived that it was her bouquet which had fallen as she entered her carriage. I snatched it up and placed it in my breast, as if I had found the most precious treasure; and was retreating to seek for my servant when I overheard a link boy observe to another,

"I say, Bill, that there fine gemman seems tarnation fond of posseys. Did you see how he cotched up that nosegay as the pale-faced lady let fall?"

"Yes, I seed it fast enough," replied Bill; I suppose as how he's her sweetheart; for them there quality folks be mighty fond of love making: bekase, as how, they have nothing else in the world to do."

At this moment, the carriage of Mrs. Mortimer was called, and I saw Mr. Vernon conduct her to it, and enter it as if he were its master. Then, one of the two tall footmen behind it, uttered an energetic "Home!" and I observed the knowing winks and smiles, and heard the ribald jests exchanged by the liveried gentry around, as the profligate pair were whirled off to the mansion of the husband she had betrayed and dishonored.

I entered my house a changed man; every feeling, every thought, having Lady Mary for its object. When my eyes fell on different articles of *virtú* in my chamber, given to me by other women, I turned from them with disgust, to kiss, again and again, the bouquet of withered flowers that she had touched; and I valued it, oh! how much the more, when I recollected that *she* would not have *given* it to any man on earth, save to her unworthy husband.

Were women but conscious of the estimation in which even the slightest favor is held, when she who accords it is known to be pure and virtuous, how cautious would they be in granting a thousand little frivolous *cadeaux* to which, though *they* attach no importance, others prefix ideas that lead to very injurious conclusions. Could they, too, but hear the conversations of their favorite beaux, at the clubs they frequent, how would they blush and tremble at the false, the often odious interpretations given to actions to which, if fairly judged, youthful imprudence or levity could alone be attributed.

But, to return to the antipodes of levity, Lady Mary, and her faded bouquet. Perhaps some of my readers will smile when I assert, that from that night I have never met the mingled odors of the rose, jessamine, and verbena, without their bringing the image of that lovely woman to my memory as vividly as though I had seen her but a few hours before. How I loathed her husband for slighting her! and yet, perhaps, I should have hated him still more had he evinced for her, at least in my presence, any marks of that passionate love which was now consuming my heart.

A few days after my memorable interview with Lady Mary, having sauntered into the fashionable jeweller's of that day, to make a purchase, I saw some very splendid diamonds, which one of the shopmen was placing in a case. Observing that they had caught my eye, he civilly laid the *etui* before me; and called my attention to a very large sapphire, which formed the centre of one of the bracelets belonging to the *parure*, and which he said, he considered to be the most perfect stone that had ever passed through his hands. He added, that it had been sold at a very high price; and in order to show me the stone in its transparent setting, he touched a secret spring, when the gold plate at the back

flying open, discovered a small enamel miniature of Mr. Vernon; the resemblance being so striking as to leave no doubt of its identity. The man had only closed the *etui* when the original of the portrait entered, ordered the case to be placed in his curricle, and drove off. I could not resist the impulse that induced me to follow the route he had taken; and I was only confirmed in the surmise I had formed as to the destination of the jewels, when I saw him stop at the door of Mrs. Mortimer, and send his curricle to the next street, to wait his return.

The diamonds and sapphire of vast price, it was plain then, were for his unworthy mistress, who probably, only valued the miniature on account of its setting, and only tolerated the donor for the sake of his gifts. How strange appears to us the passion for jewels inherent in women in all countries and times. The extent to which it was indulged in Rome, is proved by Julius Cæsar having passed a law forbidding unmarried women to wear them. One would suppose, that a similar prohibition existed in England, inferring from the impatience the generality of our young ladies evince to be married, and the pleasure they take, when this perilous desideratum has been attained, in displaying a profusion of jewels on their persons. Nor are our matrons less addicted to this expensive passion, for were the Athenian ordination, by which an unfaithful wife was prevented from wearing jewels, carried into effect in our days, it would, I believe, be the ruin of jewellers; but might be the saving of many a man's purse, if not his honor. And yet, who knows how far such a punishment might deter women from a breach of virtue; vanity, their besetting sin, being thus instigated to preserve, what hitherto it had assisted to overthrow; for, there is much more of *vanity* than *passion*, in nine-tenths of the *liaisons* that lead to a breach of conjugal fidelity.

Three nights after the occurrence at the jeweller's shop, I encountered Mrs. Mortimer at a ball, at Lady Baskerville's; sparkling in the very *parure* I had seen, and the well known sapphire on her arm Mr. Vernon, too, was there; and the lady seemed to treat him with more marked attention; the reward, as I thought, of the costly present he had made her. Lady Mary Vernon was also present, and looked, if possible, more beautiful than before She was attired in a robe of white satin open in front, and falling in ample folds to her feet. The rich blonde lace that trimmed the dress, was clasped by black enamel ornaments, *à la Sevigné;* in the centre of each of which sparkled a large diamond. The pointed stomacher, which beautifully defined her delicate waist, was confined by similar ornaments, and a necklace, and ear-rings to match, displayed the exquisite fairness of her skin. She was with an elderly lady, of a very dignified mien, who seemed wholly engrossed in a conversation with her; apparently urging her to do something, which Lady Mary declined, as I could see her wave her head, and make a motion that indicated repugnance.

I passed behind the spot where they stood, and heard the elderly lady say, in Italian, "Indeed, you are wrong, thus to shrink from *their* presence, when *yours* would probably awaken them to the impropriety of their conduct, by drawing on them the censure of the spectators of it."

"What, draw censure on *my husband?* no, not for worlds!" replied Lady Mary; "I cannot, indeed I cannot, bear to encounter them."

And as she spoke, an increased paleness, and involuntary shudder, betrayed how much even the idea of adopting such a course affected her.

I approached, and made my bow; was received with a less distant politeness than I had anticipated, though still enough reserve and gravity remained, to check a much more presuming man than I had ever been. It was evident, that the respectful deference of my manner had influenced the old lady in my favor, for she whispered Lady Mary to present me to her. No sooner was my name pronounced, than she eagerly demanded if I was the son of Lady Olivia Lyster? and on my replying in the affirmative, she told me, that my mother had been one of her oldest and dearest friends, and that she felt highly gratified at making my acquaintance. I was elated at this lucky chance, which seemed to hold forth a hope of meeting Lady Mary more frequently; for I speedily discovered that Lady Delafield (my mother's friend) was her aunt, and that they frequently saw each other.

Lady D. became quite cordial in her manner towards me; asked a thousand questions about Lyster Park, where she had often been during my infancy; and treated me, not as a new acquaintance, but as the son of an old and dear friend. While replying to her interrogations, I thought only of her charming niece, who seemed

totally abstracted, her beautiful eyes fixed on the door of the room where she knew her husband to be. Mr. Mortimer came up and accosted Lady Mary with an air and manner, so totally devoid of any suspicion that his presence was not agreeable to her, that I felt for him, when I observed the haughty coldness with which Lady Delafield returned his salutation.

"Where is Mrs. Mortimer?" asked the unconscious husband. "I expected to find her with you."

The color rose to the cheeks of Lady Mary at the question, and there was an evident embarrassment in her manner, as she answered, that she had not seen her.

"Not seen her!" repeated Mr. Mortimer; "how very odd; for she told me that she only came, because she promised to meet you."

"Very odd, indeed," said Lady Delafield, drily; "for, I venture to say that my niece was wholly ignorant of Mrs. Mortimer's intention of being here."

Lady Mary pressed the arm of her aunt, and gave her an imploring look; while Mr. Mortimer betrayed such evident symptoms of mingled surprise and displeasure, as checked Lady Delafield's further observations. He looked from the aunt, to the niece; and his face flushed, as he observed the agitation and distress, too clearly portrayed in the countenance of the latter, to admit of his doubting that some painful feelings were associated in her mind, with the mention of his wife. He muttered something, almost unintelligible, of his intention of seeking Mrs. Mortimer, and hurried into the next room. I saw terror impressed on the pallid face of Lady Mary; she whispered a few words to her aunt, who turned to me, and requested that I would immediately seek Mr. Vernon, and tell him that she required his presence. I was about to say, that I did not know Mr. Vernon, but Lady Mary interrupted me by saying, "Do, pray go, and quickly, I entreat you to go;" forgetting, in her alarm and agitation, the self control, and dignity of manner, for which she was so remarkable.

On entering the next room, I discovered Mrs. Mortimer dancing with Mr. Vernon; a circle was formed round the dancers to observe her. Her movements were such as I should never have tolerated in a wife, though they elicited general applause; and as I saw her floating through the mazy dance, I was reminded of the opinion of Sallust, who, speaking of Sempronia, the mistress of Catiline, says, "She dances with more skill than becomes a virtuous woman."

Mr. Vernon led his partner from the dance, to a sofa elevated at the end of the room, and so placed, that the persons seated on it could be seen from all sides of the apartment. His assiduity was unremitting; he assisted to place her India shawl over her shoulders to preserve her from being chilled, and displayed all *les petits soins* that a lover employs for the object of his affections, attentions which were repaid by languishing looks of tenderness, and sweet smiles. I marked the glances exchanged by the persons around them, in which were plainly expressed the malicious pleasure that a detected intrigue seldom fails to awaken.

While I endeavored to make my way through the crowd, to the place where they were seated, I caught a view of Mr. Mortimer; and never did I behold so fearful an expression as that which his countenance presented. Rage and jealousy strove for mastery, in the fiery glances which he bent on them; and which convinced me, that never before had he suspected either the fidelity of his wife, or the perfidy of his friend. From a state of happy security, he awoke at once to a conviction of their guilt; and terrible were the pangs which that conviction brought him, if we might judge by its effects on his countenance. While he stood, eyeing the guilty pair, they, totally unconscious of his presence, were exchanging looks of love, and whispers of tenderness; thus, adding fuel to the fire that raged in the breast of the wronged and duped husband.

Fearful of some public *esclandre*, that could not fail to wring the already tortured heart of Lady Mary, I conquered my repugnance to address Mr. Vernon; and, approaching him, stated that Lady Delafield requested to see him immediately. The message seemed to annoy him and his companion; they whispered, looked confused, and after a few minutes' consultation he left her, promising to return immediately.

I mingled in the crowd, still remaining near enough to observe Mrs. Mortimer, and shortly after saw her husband walk up to her. She perceived him not until he was at her side; and, on recognising him, started as if she had seen a spectre, changed color, and immediately attempted to envelop her person in the India shawl. But it resisted all her efforts to pass it over her stiffened sleeves; and her exertions only exposed still more the brilliant

diamonds that encircled her arms. She was evidently struggling to acquire some portion of self-possession; and, after the pause of a moment, turned to her husband, and observed, "Who ever should have thought of seeing you here?"

"Not *you* I am persuaded," replied he, his lips trembling with suppressed emotion. "It is fortunate, however, that I *have* come, as my unexpected presence gives me an opportunity of admiring the rare and costly jewels you wear, and which I now see for the first time."

She became as pale as death and then blushed a deep red.

"Oh! the fact is," said she, "I hired them for this night, as I was tired of always appearing in the same ornaments."

I could observe that her husband believed the assertion; for his features relaxed some portion of their rigid expression. She, too, perceived that he was the dupe of her falsehood, and taking courage, she added, "I am so glad you are come, for I was wishing to go home, I feel tired and chilly."

As she thus spoke, her evil stars led her to endeavor again to wrap the shawl around her, when, in the effort to do so, one of her bracelets became unclasped and fell to the ground. In the fall, the secret spring flew open, discovering to the horrified gaze of her husband, who had stooped to take it up, the miniature of Mr. Vernon.

"And this portrait, too, was doubtlessly hired for the night," said he, fixing his petrefying glance on her face—"Come, leave this scene directly, madam, *you* and *I* have a fearful reckoning to settle, and this is no place for it."

She seemed overcome by terror and confusion, and hesitated to obey his commands. He turned fiercely towards her, seized her arm, drew it within his, and dragged, rather than led her, through the long suite of rooms; I followed to observe their movements. When they reached the drawing-room, where I had left Lady Mary and her aunt, a bustle and confusion among the company impeded the progress of Mr. Mortimer. Lady Mary Vernon had fainted; and, as is usual on such occasions, a circle had formed round her, increasing the heat and pressure, and consequently the illness for which they affected to feel such sympathy. Lady Delafield loudly entreated them to disperse, and, on their doing so, I beheld Lady Mary, as she reclined on an ottoman, supported by the Duchess of B., Lady Delafield holding to her nostrils one of the many *flacons* offered by the surrounding groups of ladies. Lady Mary presented the appearance of death; her eyes were closed, their long dark lashes throwing a more ghastly shade over the pale cheeks beneath them: yet still, though bearing the semblance of death, her matchless beauty shone conspicuous, being not obliterated, but wearing a new character; a character that might have justified its being called the holiness of beauty, so calm, so unearthly, was its loveliness.

My heart sank within me while I gazed on that marble face; and its striking resemblance to Louisa Sydney, as I last saw her, made me shudder. At this moment, Lady Delafield caught a view of Mrs. Mortimer, and gave her a look that must have spoken daggers to her, so plainly did it say, "See what you have done."

The look was not lost on Mr. Mortimer; it seemed to increase his rage, for he pulled his terrified wife along, and descended the stairs, down which her trembling limbs could hardly support her. They had only driven off a moment, when Mr. Vernon returned from searching for his servant in the crowd. I narrowly examined his countenance, as he approached Lady Mary, who was still in a state of insensibility; and never did I behold contrition and sorrow more clearly delineated, than in the look he fixed on her pale, but beautiful face.

"This man is not hardened in guilt, nor insensible to its fearful effects on others," thought I, as I saw him stoop to raise her tenderly from the sofa. The movement recalled her to consciousness; her lips moved, she opened her languid eyes, and fixed them on the face of her husband, with an expression of such deep, such unutterable tenderness, which, whatever might be its effect on him, sank into my very soul; and made me feel that I would sacrifice all I possessed, to have such a look fixed on me by those melting eyes.

His affectionate assiduity seemed to restore her, and she repaid it by faint smiles.

"Are you quite sure, dear aunt, that nothing dreadful has occurred?" asked Lady Mary, when Mr. Vernon had again left her, to see if the carriage was ready.

"Quite sure; my dear," replied Lady Delafield.

"Oh, what a relief! I was so alarmed by the terrible expression of Mr. Mortimer's face, that the most fearful presentiment rushed on my mind, and I felt as though I had been dying."

"Hush, hush, my dear," said Lady Delafield, "you were needlessly frightened. I am sorry that I suffered him to know the truth, as it has made you ill; but *he* must be well accustomed to the subterfuges of his worthless wife, if, indeed, she thinks it necessary to use any with him."

Mr. Vernon returned to support his wife to her carriage; and I beheld them drive off, with feelings little in harmony with the scene of splendid festivity around me, and more than ever in love with Lady Mary.

How strange is the human heart! The very tenderness I had seen her display towards another seemed to increase mine towards her. The freedom from all harshness or reproach, with which she received his attentions, elevated her character in my estimation; and made me view her more as an angelic being, than as a woman.

The next day, at an early hour, business having called me into the city, I was passing though Fleet Street, when I heard my name pronounced by a female voice, with an intreaty that I should enter the shop whence it proceeded. I hesitated as to whether I should comply with the request or not, when the shopman presented himself at the door, and repeated it. On entering the shop, I beheld a very respectable looking female, in a state of great agitation, who immediately appealed to me, to satisfy the owner of the shop, as to her respectability. In this person I recognised a Mrs. Tisdeal, who had lived several years, as a sort of humble companion, or upper *femme de chambre*, with my poor mother, and had been a great favorite of hers; but of whom I had lost sight for a long time.

"Oh! sir," sobbed she, "you find me here charged with theft. I have been employed to dispose of some jewels of value: the owner wishes that her name should not be divulged; and unless I disclose it, that she may certify it was by her desire I offered her diamonds for sale, the owner of this shop threatens to commit me to prison, on suspicion that I have obtained them dishonestly. You, Mr. Lyster, who have known me for so many years, will, I am sure, answer for my character; but let me not be forced to reveal the name I so much wish to conceal."

"Look here, sir," said the jeweller, opening the case, and displaying its glittering contents: "these jewels are of too great value to be entrusted to a servant."

I started with amazement, on recognising the magnificent *parure* worn by Lady Mary Vernon the night before, which, being the first I had ever seen set in black enamel, had made an impression on my memory.

"Yes, sir," resumed the jeweller, "these diamonds are of extraordinary beauty, and appearances are very much against this person. When I required a reference, and asked the ordinary questions which a cautious and reputable buyer, under such circumstances, ought to ask, this woman betrayed evident symptoms of confusion, and declined stating to whom the jewels belong, or her own place of residence."

I assured the scrupulous shopkeeper, that I knew the female present perfectly well, and could answer for her honesty.

"Why, that's all very well, sir," said he; "but you'll excuse me if I state, that I know no more of you, than of this woman. The affair is, altogether very suspicious—very suspicious indeed. You happen *most opportunely*, to be passing my door, at the very moment I was going to send for the police, to take this person into custody on suspicion of robbery. She sees you, calls out to you directly, you come in, and without asking her a single question, as to how she came by the diamonds, offer to be answerable for her honesty. You'll excuse me, sir; but all this has a very odd appearance—a very odd appearance indeed. There, John," turning to one of his shopmen; "go and call a couple of the police, for it's my opinion we shall have *two* persons to commit, instead of one."

"Why, what the devil!" said I, getting angry; "you surely cannot mean to suspect or commit *me?*"

"You'll excuse me, sir, replied the imperturbable jeweller, "but I mean to do both, unless you can forthwith satisfy me of your own respectability. This affair looks very like a conspiracy, sir, very like indeed; and your popping by so opportunely leads me to think that you are nothing more or less than a confederate of this person."

"What! suspect Mr. Lyster, of Lyster Park, one of the richest gentlemen in the county of Nottinghamshire!" exclaimed Mrs. Tisdeal, in mingled amazement and indignation.

"And you, ma'am," said the jeweller, sneeringly, "are probably one of the richest ladies in some other county. No, no, I am an old bird, and not to be caught with chaff, as the saying goes; and so I

won't take your character for this gentleman, nor his, for you."

"Let me speak to you alone, for a few minutes," said Mrs Tisdeal.

"Ay, ay," said the jeweller, "lay your heads together, and make up a good story between you. See to the door, Thomas."

"You will regret this conduct," said I, much excited by his insulting suspicions, and the gross vulgarity with which they were expressed.

Having retired to the far corner of the shop with the agitated Mrs. Tisdeal, I told her in a low voice that I recognised the jewels, having seen them the night before, but that her secret was safe with me.

"Oh! sir," said she, "my lady has the most pressing occasion for a large sum of money—not for herself, dear angel lady—but for her husband. *He* is to know nothing of the sale of the diamonds, for he would never consent to it, and is to be led to believe that the money comes from my lady's aunt. Oh, sir, if this jeweller was to discover whence I come, he would go to Mr. Vernon's and all would be known; and the mortification would be so great to her ladyship, that, rather than expose her to it, I would suffer any indignity to myself."

"Well, I say, have you concocted your story?" asked the jeweller, with an insolent sneer, suspicion having rapidly grown into certainty.

"What is the value of these diamonds?" demanded I.

"The value?" replied he; "why, more than you'll ever come honestly by, I'm thinking.

"I ask you what is their value," resumed I, making an effort (and it required one) to master my rapidly increasing wrath.

"Well, then, their value is five thousand pounds, though, at the present time, with the scarcity of money that exists, I doubt if they would fetch more than four thousand five hundred."

"Give me pen, ink, and paper," asked I; a demand he more than half reluctantly complied with.

While I was writing a few lines to my bankers, Messrs. Child and Co., John, his shopman, returned with two policemen. They eyed me with looks filled with suspicion; and I overheard the sapient John remark, that "he was sure I was an old offender, for rogue was written in my face."

I wrote to request my bankers to send any one of the clerks who knew me, with bank notes to the amount of five thousand pounds, to the shop of Mr. Thompson, No. 6, Fleet street, with as little delay as possible: and having promised Thomas, the less suspicious shopman, a reward for his trouble, I despatched him, with my note, to the bank.

During his absence, the jeweller seemed puzzled what to think; poor Mrs. Tisdeal still trembled from the alarm she had undergone; and the two policemen maintained a demeanor of official gravity.

Thomas soon came back, out of breath from the speed he had made, and announced that Mr. Smith, the head clerk of the house, would soon wait on me.

This intelligence seemed to occasion the jeweller a considerable diminution of his self-complacency, and caused him to assume a somewhat less disrespectful bearing towards me. Yet, he appeared disappointed at the probability that, after all, I should turn out to be neither a thief nor the confederate of a thief: and vexed and annoyed as I felt at the moment, I could not help observing then, as subsequently I have frequently remarked, that the generality of suspicious persons are more irritated than gratified, at discovering innocence in the individual whom they had prejudged to have been guilty.

His countenance became perfectly ludicrous when, *not* the head clerk of the bank, but Mr. Child himself, entered the shop; and, shaking me cordially by the hand, told me that *he* was the bearer of the five thousand pounds, because he was induced to infer, from the manner of the bearer of my letter, as well as its contents, that something extraordinary had occurred.

While I explained to him the awkward predicament in which the suspicions of Mr. Thompson had placed me, it was comical to observe the countenance of that varlet. He kept bowing to the ground, repeating,

"Indeed, sir, I'm sure, sir, I would not for fifty pounds that such a mistake had taken place. I hope, sir, you'll excuse me; I am quite confounded, indeed, sir: I know not what to say. Pray Mr. Child, speak a word for me; indeed, I meant no offence; but we jewellers are obliged to be so strict, so very particular, sir."

"Yes," interrupted I, "'and I happened so *opportunely* to be passing your door,' and 'looked so like an old offender' "—glancing at the now crest-fallen John the shopman; who, as he had emulated his master in suspicion half an hour before, now emulated him in humility, and

hung his head most sheepishly, at my thus repeating his recent observations.

Mr. Child was really angry, and reprimanded the knave of diamonds; for, such he actually was, as he had been in more than one scrape for having bought stolen jewels, knowing, or at least having had cause to suspect, that they were dishonestly obtained. He wished to re-establish his injured reputation in the present instance, by displaying a more than ordinary degree of precaution; so, poor Mrs. Tisdeal and I were the victims to his newborn scruples.

Mr. Child finding that I had no carriage with me, pressed me to let him send me his; but I refused, and having procured a hackney coach, placed Mrs. Tisdeal in it, and seated myself by her side, ordered the coachman to drive to the corner of Grosvenor Square. I gave her the five thousand pounds, making her believe that I was glad of an opportunity of purchasing so fine a set of diamonds, and that I considered them a bargain.

During our drive, she told me that she had now been three years with Lady Mary Vernon; Lady Delafield, having known her when with my mother, had recommended her to her niece, on the marriage of that lady. She added, that during the first two years her situation had been a very happy one; but, that now—and here she paused.

I told her that it was not a frivolous curiosity which led me to inquire why she no longer was happy in Lady Mary's establishment.

"Alas! sir, how can I feel happy, when I see my lady, who is an angel, if ever an angel appeared upon earth, wretched; she, that used to be so buoyant, and cheerful, whose dear sweet laugh used to gladden my ears, and whose bright, joyous looks were like sunshine to me. All is now changed; my lady's voice is never heard except in accents so low and mournful that they make me sad; her bright looks are faded, and when she tries to smile, indeed, sir, it causes my heart to ache, her deep, melancholy eyes, and pale cheeks, seem in such marked contrast with the smile. She will sit for whole hours, sir, with her head leaning on her hand, and, though a book lies open before her, she never turns over a page. But, when she hears Mr. Vernon's step approaching, she starts up, and strives to assume a cheerful face to welcome him; and he—oh! sir, it angers me to see that he does not, or will not, notice the sad change that has come over her, she that used to be as fresh as a rose, and as blithe as a lark."

"And what, my good Mrs. Tisdeal, do you think is the cause of all this?"

"Indeed, sir, I fear that there is but too much cause; for, Mr. Vernon, who used to be the most attentive, nay, the most doting husband in the world, has now become careless, cold, and silent; absenting himself continually from home, and when there, evidently impatient to quit it. My lady receives anonymous letters continually, sir; I know they are anonymous, because, when she opens them, she colors, and throws them in the fire. I shall never forget the first that came; she was in her dressing-room, and I delivered it to her. While she was reading it, I by chance looked in the large mirror near to which she was standing, and her appearance terrified me; she was as pale as death, sir; her eyes seemed to grow larger, and her brow contracted as if she was suffering an intense agony. Her lips were compressed, and her hand trembled so violently that she could scarcely hold the letter. Oh! how I execrated the heartless, the wicked person, that could thus rudely tear the bandage from her eyes, and plant a dagger in her heart! Surely, sir, there are few actions so vile, or so wicked, as the writing anonymous letters. I longed to throw myself at her feet, but I dared not interfere; and though my heart ached for her, I stole out of the room as if I had not observed her agitation, and remained in the ante-chamber, fearful of withdrawing further, lest she might require my assistance.

"She did not ring for hours, but when I entered was quite calm, sir; though I could discover, by her blanched cheek and heavy eyes, what was passing within her mind. She has never been herself from that time; and each day has seen her grow paler and more melancholy. Last night, my lady returned from a ball to which Lady Delafield had forced her to go. She came home attended by her aunt; and Mr. Vernon, who seemed most anxious and alarmed, watching over her, and holding her hand, just as he used formerly to do. Oh! sir, it made me so happy! But my lady's aunt kept hinting, and more than hinting, that all her illness was *his* doing; and this vexed him, and my lady too. Lady Delafield is an excellent lady, but she does not understand how much mischief may be done by reminding a husband of the consequences of conduct he wishes to forget. One sweet smile and kind word from the wife he has

injured, would have a better effect than all the lectures in the world; for men, sir, are always proud and wilful when they have done wrong, and must be allowed to have the triumph of having come round to the right path themselves, without having been schooled into it. I heartily wished Lady Delafield away; and so, I am sure, did my lady and Mr. Vernon. When she had gone, Mr. Vernon scarcely waited for the door to close after her, when he ran up and embraced my lady; and, indeed, sir, I saw the tears stream from both their eyes, though I left the chamber as quickly as I could.

"In an hour after, a letter was brought by Mrs. Mortimer's footman, with directions that it should be delivered immediately, as it was of great consequence. My heart misgave me when Mr. Vernon's valet asked me to tell his master that he wanted to speak to him immediately—I refused; and would you believe it, sir, the jackanapes became quite pert and saucy, said it was as much as his place was worth to keep a note from Mrs. Mortimer waiting, and that if *I* would not deliver his message to his master, he should take it to the door of my lady's room himself. Could gentlemen but know, sir, how they debase themselves, even in the eyes of their own servants, when they allow them to discover their vices, how careful would they be, if not to amend, at least to conceal them; for, their menials must become either the censors, or the assistants of them, and that they should be either, is most degrading to a master. I trembled when I took the message, though I tried to look as unconcerned as possible. The fact is, sir, all our servants had been for some time passing their jokes and remarks on Mr. Vernon's constant visits and letters to that lady; and when her footman brought a note, he brought scandal and evil reports also; consequently, I feared the letter he now bore, might break up the good understanding that I hoped was about to be re-established between my lady and her husband. When I delivered the message, Mr. Vernon grew as red as fire in the face, and my lady turned as pale as marble. He went outside the door, took the note from his servant, and without breaking the seal, gave it into my lady's hands. She looked up in his face—oh! such a look of love and confidence—and said, 'No, dearest, *you* must read it, *I cannot*, ought not, it would be indelicate, unwomanly.'

"I left the room, but before the door closed, I heard him exclaim, 'How like you, my own Mary, and how unlike—' I heard no more. Early this morning, my lady came to me, and placing the jewels, you have bought, sir, in my hands, desired me to dispose of them to the highest bidder, as she had immediate occasion for the money. She told me to tell her (in case Mr. Vernon was present) that Lady Delafield had sent a letter and parcel for her, that is, if I had disposed of the diamonds. I know that it cannot be for herself that my lady requires the money; for, she is more prudent than any lady I ever knew, and never incurs a debt; so, it must be for Mr. Vernon."

Various and contending were the emotions with which I listened to Mrs. Tisdeal's prolix detail; jealousy was, however, the predominant: and, shall I confess my unworthiness, I was more than once tempted to return the jewels and get back my money, sooner than it should serve as a new bond of kindness between Lady Mary and her weak-minded husband. But my better nature triumphed. There were moments in which I felt vexed at her so readily yielding him her pardon, and accused her of weakness; however, a little reflection showed her to me in all the purity and gentleness of a pitying angel *rejoicing* over a repentant sinner, rather than as an injured wife pardoning the errors of a reclaimed husband. Thus, the nobleness of her disposition made me more deeply enamored of her, while it forbade every hope of my passion ever meeting the least return.

"I left home, sir," resumed Mrs. Tisdeal, "at nine o'clock, and called at three jewellers before I entered the shop where you rescued me. Oh, dear! how late it is!" casting her eyes up at a watchmaker's door, over which a dial marked the hour of four. "How long my lady will have thought my absence!"

I had been so engrossed by the communications Mrs. Tisdeal had been making, that I had not reflected on the impropriety of my being seen to drive up with her to Lady Mary's residence; to which we were now rapidly approaching, having entered Grosvenor Square. I had just resolved that I would endeavor to conceal myself while Mrs. Tisdeal descended, when a hackney coach that preceded us, stopped at the very door to which we were proceeding. The blinds were up, but the step was in an instant let down, and Lord Percy, a friend of mine, jumped out, evidently in a state of agitation, and hastily entered the house, leaving the coach still waiting. Mrs. Tisdeal called our

coachman to let her descend; and he was in the act of assisting her from the vehicle when Lord Percy returned from the hall, accompanied by half a dozen servants, opened the coach door, and, after two or three minutes' delay, I beheld them bearing Mr. Vernon, apparently dead, or dying, in their arms.

Horror-struck at the sight, I jumped from my coach, and followed them into the hall; when Percy recognising me, whispered,

"This is a fearful business. Mortimer challenged poor Vernon, who is, I fear, mortally wounded. Good God! who is to break it to Lady Mary?"

They bore him into the library. Servants were despatched at every side for surgeons, and Mrs. Tisdeal promised to keep Lady Mary in her dressing-room, in ignorance of the fatal event, while I ran for Lady Delafield. I met her carriage entering the Square, stopped it, and with all possible precaution told her what had occurred. She made me get into the chariot and accompany her to Lady Mary's, saying, that I might be useful to her in her affliction; and I was too glad to be near the object of my idolatry not to embrace eagerly the offer. It was now that I felt for the first time the holy, the purifying effects of real love. I would have given a limb, nay, my life, to have saved that of Mr. Vernon; ay, more, I would have supported the sight of her I so passionately, so madly loved, lavishing her caresses on him, sooner than know she was wretched. His existence became to me, from this moment, of vital importance, because on it I felt her happiness, her very being depended; and every selfish sentiment faded away before the thought of her sorrow and despair.

Lady Delafield hurried up stairs as quick as her aged and trembling limbs could bear her, begging me to remain in the house until she saw me again. The servants showed me into a small ante-room that communicated with the library; and there, I could hear the stifled groans of the wounded sufferer, as the surgeons endeavored to extract the ball from his side.

"I feel I am dying," uttered Mr. Vernon; "let me see my wife."

There seemed to be some hesitation on the part of the surgeons; but he again demanded her presence, adding, in a faint voice,

"It is useless to torture me, life is ebbing fast, and all will soon be over."

In a few minutes, I heard Lady Mary enter the room from a private staircase; when, the ejaculation of "Oh! my poor Mary!" from Mr. Vernon, told how deep must have been that expression of anguish on her countenance which thus caused him to lose, in his pity for *her*, all sense of his own sufferings.

"Pray, madam, be composed," said one of the surgeons.

"Think not of me," replied she, in accents that made me tremble; so profound, though subdued, was the despair they denoted.

"Leave us, leave us," said Mr. Vernon, "I have much to say ere yet my strength totally fails me."

The surgeons left the library for an inner room; and I then could hear the stifled sobs of the husband, mingled with the low, sweet voice of the wife.

"You will be spared to me, my own love; the Almighty is merciful," murmured Lady Mary.

"No: Mary, my blessed Mary, I feel that my wound is mortal. I have deserved this punishment; yes, I own that I have deserved it. How could I be so infatuated, so madly infatuated, as to yield to her seductions, and forget for a moment you, who have ever been an angel to me?"

"Think not of this fatal subject now, dearest," replied Lady Mary, "think only of our cordial, our happy reconciliation of last night; when you abjured the only error of which you had to accuse yourself."

"Yes, Mary, God be thanked! I waited not for a death-bed to repent; for, I then fully determined never to see *that* woman again; and had life been spared me, this resolution would have been faithfully sustained. My folly, my guilt, have led to this fatal result; and I shall be torn from you, my own Mary, just when I had reawakened to a sense of all I owe you, without the power of atoning for the ills I have inflicted. How precious appear now the days I have wasted! Oh, Mary! what would I not give for a few months, a few weeks even, of life to be spent with you. *Her* husband challenged me; to refuse to meet him was impossible; and fondly as I would now cling to existence, I would rather die by *his* hand, than that he should have fallen by mine. I was determined not to return his fire; for, I repeat, I would not for worlds have his blood on my head. Will you forgive me, my precious Mary, for talking of *her?* But too well do I know your generous, your pitying heart, to doubt that you will

pardon me. She is driven from her home, dishonored, and an outcast; I am the cause of all the evil that has befallen her, and it weighs heavily on my mind. Promise me, that when I am gone, you will bestow on her the means of existence."

"Doubt it not, dearest, all, every thing shall be done; but, you *will* be spared to my prayers. Oh! do not say, do not think otherwise."

"Alas! my Mary, how can I deceive you? I feel that my hours are numbered: but let me conclude for ever the painful subject on which we were speaking. Even now, Mary, this wretched woman may be in want; send to her, I entreat you, sufficient supply to screen her from pecuniary difficulties. My friend Spencer will lend me a few hundreds; for, as I told you last night, I have squandered away such immense sums of late, that I have scarcely any money left at my banker's."

"My aunt has placed a large sum at my disposal, dearest love, and I shall send it to this unhappy woman immediately."

"Bless you, bless you, Mary; I *knew* you would cheerfully act as you are now doing."

The surgeons now returned to the library, and after a short consultation, they had their patient moved to his chamber, where an opiate was administered to him. Soon after taking this medicine he fell into a slumber; and then, and not till then, did his wretched wife betray the first symptom of the dreadful effect produced on her frame by the terrible shock she had received, for she dropped from the chair into which she had sunk, in a deep swoon. I heard the whispered ejaculations of the surgeons as they assisted to bear her from the chamber, and my heart died within me as I caught their observations indicating her danger; while *I*, within a few paces of her, dared not approach her. Never was the humanising power of sympathy more truly felt than by me at this moment; I would have faced death, I do believe, in its most fearful shape, to have seen her relieved from the weight of misery that oppressed her; and her sufferings engrossed every thought, every feeling.

Hours seemed comprised in the minutes that elapsed during her insensibility; and never did a doting mother watch over an only child with more intense, more agonising anxiety, than I experienced while listening for some sound to announce her return to consciousness. When she recovered, Lady Delafield came to me; and, though rarely overpowered by her feelings, she was so struck with the expression of sorrow in my countenance, that she took my hand kindly, and thanked me for the interest I evinced in the affliction of her family.

The compliments she paid to my goodness of heart and *disinterested* kindness, were so unmerited, that I became confused. But even my evident embarrassment was considered by the excellent old lady as an additional proof of my goodness; and she remarked how much I resembled my dear mother at this moment, and how truly she prized my sympathy.

I hardly dared trust myself to inquire for Lady Mary; but Lady Delafield informed me that her niece was now much better, and was on her knees praying for strength *whence only* it can be derived to bear up against the trial that awaited her. On recovering from her swoon she had insisted on the surgeons informing her of the real state of her unfortunate husband. They wished to temporise with her; but she was inflexible; and they at length admitted, that though he might live a few days, nay, a few weeks, his death was inevitable, as the ball had entered a vital part, and could not be extracted.

"Poor, dear soul, she bore this fatal information with wonderful fortitude," continued Lady Delafield. "After a few minutes' conversation with her attendant, Mrs. Tisdeal, she seemed inspired with new energy, and imposed a task on me that I cannot, ought not, to perform; and yet, she declared, that unless it be executed she can know no rest. Perhaps you, my dear Mr. Lyster, would be my substitute on this disagreeable errand?"

I instantly offered to do any thing she wished; and she intrusted me with a small sealed packet to convey to Mrs. Mortimer, who was staying incognita at a villa near Fulham, and to deliver it into her own hands. I asked, and obtained a ready consent to return to Grosvenor Square as soon as I should have fulfilled my mission; and again the old lady complimented me on my good nature.

I proceeded to Fulham, and, after some difficulty, succeeded in gaining admission to Mrs. Mortimer, who received me with a mingled air of pride and shame.

"I have waited on you, madam," said I, "by the desire of Lady Delafield, to deliver this parcel."

Her cheeks became suffused with a deep crimson; and with much agitation she tore

open the envelop, from which dropped the five thousand pounds I had given to Mrs. Tisdeal, not three hours before.

"What does this mean, sir," asked she, haughtily: "there is not a line here," she continued, pointing to the envelop, "to explain why, or from whom, this money was sent."

"The parcel, madam, was confided by Lady Mary Vernon to her aunt, to deliver to you; but that lady feeling unequal to the task, intrusted it to me."

"Oh! then, I am to conclude, sir," said she, imperiously, "that this money is sent me by the wife, as a bribe to induce me to forego my claims on the husband. But, she little knows me, if she supposes that, disgraced as I am, driven with ignominy from my home, owing to my ill-starred attachment to Mr. Vernon, I will now resign him for whom I have sacrificed so much. No, sir! take back this money to Lady Mary. Mr. Vernon is too much a man of honor to abandon the woman he has ruined; and I" (here she burst into tears) "have paid too dearly for his affection, to relinquish my claim to it now, when I have nought left beside."

"Madam you must make up your mind to this sacrifice," replied I.

"Never, never, sir," interrupted she.

"Alas, madam, it no longer depends on *your* will. The separation is inevitable."

"You do not mean to say that *he* is so weak, so vacillating, as to consent to it?" demanded she, with anger flashing from her eyes. "If so, his conduct is shameful, and merits my contempt."

"Mr. Vernon is at present, madam, resumed I, "entitled to the pity of all; for, he is on the bed of death, to which his errors have untimely conducted him."

"On the bed of death!" shrieked Mrs. Mortimer; "*he*, who last night was in perfect health? No, you deceive me: it is not —it cannot be so."

"He was mortally wounded in a duel this morning," said I.

"And by my husband's hand," interrupted she. "Ay, reveal it all; leave nothing of the dreadful tale untold." As she frantically uttered these words, she fell from her chair in violent hysterics.

I rang for her attendant, and, from feelings of humanity, waited until the first violence of her emotions had subsided. While she continued sobbing and shrieking, her *femme de chambre* displayed the most extraordinary nonchalance: performing the services that the position of her mistress required, with a *brusquerie*, and an evident want of good feeling, that shocked me. Something in the countenance and whole air of this woman impressed me with a most unfavorable opinion of her, which her conduct towards Mrs. Mortimer served to confirm; and I determined therefore not to leave that unhappy person until she had recovered some degree of consciousness, not wishing to trust either her, or the bank notes, which I had picked up from the carpet, to the tender mercy of her servant.

When Mrs. Mortimer had regained some portion of composure, she dismissed her *femme de chambre* from the room; who left it, with such undisguised impertinence of manner, that I pitied the fallen and unhappy woman, who was helplessly exposed to this insolence.

"Are you sure, quite sure, that Mr. Vernon cannot recover?" asked Mrs. Mortimer.

"The surgeons have so pronounced," replied I.

"And did Lady Mary know this fact, when she sent the money?"

"Yes; she had been informed that there was no hope."

"Oh, God! oh, God! forgive me!" exclaimed Mrs. Mortimer, bursting into a paroxysm of tears; "and this—this is the woman I have so wronged, I have so tortured!"

I felt myself relent towards her, as I witnessed the deep and salutary impression made on her by Lady Mary's goodness. I spoke kindly to her, and succeeded, though not without much difficulty, in inducing her to retain the bank notes; then, in the hope of affording an additional mitigation to her sorrow, promised to inform her daily of the state of Mr. Vernon.

"Oh, I am wretched and disgraced," sobbed she, while I used my fruitless endeavors to soothe her. "It seems strange and puerile to think of such a contemptible annoyance at this moment, weighed down as I am, by afflictions so appalling; but my maid—she on whom I have literally lavished money and presents—has so grossly insulted me last night and this morning, that I shrink from encountering, and have not courage to dismiss her."

I promised immediately to take this office on myself, and to get my housekeeper to send her a *femme de chambre*, in a few hours. Her gratitude was extreme, and proved that she had still some good feeling left.

"Never did I witness such concentrated rage and malice as in Madame Claudine, for

Oh! yet grant *one* other:
Let this ring of thine,
Pledged before the altar
In exchange for mine,
Rest with me, the darkness
Of my grave to share,
Though the worm around it
Kiss thy shining hair.
Hush! a cloud comes o'er me,
Thee no more I see;
'Tis, oh God! our parting—
Blessings rest with thee!

Various were the wishes and hopes that passed through my mind during the lingering illness of Mr. Vernon. There were days when I longed, absolutely longed for his death; because I considered that each hour added to his suffering existence, abridged one from that of Lady Mary. I pictured to myself that the first vehemence of her grief at his decease being subdued, resignation would follow, and lead to the recovery of her shattered health. *Time*, the healer of even the deepest wounds of grief, would, I fondly imagined, cicatrize, if not totally efface, hers. Fool that I was! I knew not how a woman can love, or mourn; and it was reserved for this pure and lovely creature to instruct me. At other times, when Lady Delafield has recounted to me the despair and anguish of her niece, as her husband's approaching dissolution seemed to draw nearer, I have prayed, fervently prayed, that his life might be prolonged, even though it offered an impassable barrier between her I doted on, and my hopes.

I had now become an *habitué* at Grosvenor Square, where Lady Delafield had taken up her residence. She saw, however, but little of her niece, who never left her husband's chamber but when she sought her couch for an hour's slumber. I felt an indescribable, though a melancholy, pleasure, in being thus almost an inmate in the house of her I loved. Lady Delafield clung to me with all the helplessness of age. I was the person to be consulted on all emergencies, and in whose patient ear all her griefs were to be poured. Frequently did she acknowledge her obligations to me, and say, that I was necessary to her very existence; that, without me, she could not have borne up against the troubles present and prospective, that menaced her; and that she considered me as one of her family. How has my foolish heart beat with vague hopes, at hearing such words! They engendered the delusive idea, that, at some remote period, when informed by her aunt of my unceasing attentions, I might be permitted, as a friend, to console Lady Mary; and from friendship to love, I fancied the distance not insuperable.

Thus, unworthy as I was, my kindness to her aged relative, the friend of my dear mother, had its source only in selfishness. It was true, that I hardly dared imagine that I could ever become more than a friend to Lady Mary; but to be even this, would be to be blessed beyond all that I had ever yet experienced, and, as the verse says,

"None without Hope e'er loved the brightest fair,
For Love will hope, when Reason would despair."

So, hope presented me indistinct, but delicious, visions, never, never to be realised. I loved to sit on the chairs, or recline on the sofa, which had been pressed by her; all the objects in the rooms on which her eyes had ever rested, possessed a charm for me: the very atmosphere of the apartment seemed impregnated with a fragrance that breathed of her; and I was only tranquil when beneath her roof. I have felt abashed and humiliated when Lady Delafield heaped commendations on my domestic habits and sedentary tastes; and, above all, on the disinterested devotion of my time and comfort to *her*.

The good old lady little imagined that I was the slave to an ungovernable and unhallowed passion, and that all attentions to her proceeded from selfish motives. She talked incessantly of her niece; a subject on which I could have listened for ever. She related a thousand incidents connected with her infancy and girlhood, all calculated to rivet still more closely the chain that bound me to her. How have I writhed in the pangs of jealousy, when she has dwelt, with prolixity, on the passionate attachment of Lady Mary to her husband; and how have I endeavored to lead her to revert to the period antecedent to her niece's knowledge of him. On one occasion—I shall never forget it—she observed to me, that she often thought I seemed formed for Lady Mary. "We possessed," she said, "the same love of home and quiet." I felt the blood rush to my very temples. "And yet," continued she, "perhaps you might not have liked each other; for similarity of tastes does not always beget affection. I remember, that when I asked Mary, the day you were presented to me, if she did not think you good looking?" (how my heart throbbed,) "she replied that she had not observed you sufficiently to judge."

How did this speech wound me! Never did vanity receive a more severe check.

Lady Delafield probably observed my mortification, for she resumed:

"The second time we met you, Mary assented to my remark, that yours was a good countenance."

Then she *had* remarked me; and my appearance had not displeased her! Here, was subject for joy; and Hope once more spread its wings, and soared into the future.

Mr. Vernon had now lingered on for six weeks, six *blessed* weeks, as his admirable wife called them; for, during that period, she had taught him to look to *another world*, for that happiness promised to the repentant sinner. But the mandate had gone forth; death was not to be cheated of his prey; and Mr. Vernon expired in the arms of his wife, blessing her with his latest breath.

Prepared as we considered Lady Mary to be, for this calamity, she soon sank under it; and a few weeks saw her borne to the grave, that so lately received the mortal remains of him she loved so well.

Though years, long years, have elapsed since I saw her deposited in the tomb, my recollection of the appalling spectacle is at this moment as vivid as though it had occurred but yesterday. What I suffered, those only can know, who, having centred all feelings, all hopes, in one passion, behold the object of it snatched for ever from their view. I mourned her long and deeply;—but why dwell on this painful theme? She died, unknowing that she left on earth a heart that would long bleed for her loss; and I had not even the consolation of thinking that she would have pitied the attachment she had inspired.

Shortly after her death, her aunt gave me the following verses, written by Lady Mary, a few days subsequent to the interment of her husband.

THE MOURNER.

I saw thee when death hovered nigh,
And set his seal upon thy brow;
I heard thy struggling groan and sigh,
Which e'en in memory haunts me now.

I saw the lips, all pale and chill,
Where words of love were wont to dwell,
And felt a pang my bosom thrill,
That words can never, never tell.

And when the fearful strife was o'er,
When life had fled, and hope was gone,
I gazed on thy dear face once more—
That face which still I gaze upon.

I thought how soon the cold, dark grave
Would hide thee from my tearful eye,
And, frighted, shrank from life, to crave,
In that chill tomb with thee to lie.

I call'd thee by fond names of love,
Names that were wont to charm thine ear;
But nought the ear of death could move,
And heedless fell each burning tear.

Tears fell in streams upon thy brow,
As my pale lips to thine were press'd;
But, ah! those lava showers had now
No power to break thy marble rest.

Within the coffin's narrow bound
Thy cold remains too soon were laid:
Ah! worse than death, was the harsh sound
The closing of that coffin made.

Why did I live beyond that hour
When "all the life of life is fled?"
Existence, fearful is thy power,
Who lingerest still, when Hope is dead!

When I had perused them, I could not refrain from feeling, that it was better she had not been left to drag on an existence which the loss of him she had so fondly loved, must have for ever embittered: and I ceased to delude myself any longer with the hope, that a heart so devoted as hers had been, should ever have found consolation in a second attachment.

Pity induced me to continue to poor Lady Delafield, the attentions that a selfish motive first led me to pay her. She survived her niece but a year; and, dying, bequeathed to me the portrait now before me, which I have preserved with a religious care. When I have since heard some heartless coxcomb, or witless worldling, pronounce woman to be incapable of a lasting attachment, I have turned from them with scorn, to think of Lady Mary Vernon; whose love neither neglect, unkindness, nor even death itself could change, and who followed the object of her attachment to the grave from which she could not save him.

## MY FOURTH LOVE.

What! (I fancy I hear some indignant fair one say), can he again have loved? and has the pure flame, kindled by the beautiful and sainted Mary, been profaned by some unworthy successor to her place in his heart?

Alas! it was even so: the grief, that I thought indestructible, passed away, like all other things in this sublunary world, fading day by day, until nothing of it was left but a tender melancholy, like the softened feeling that a summer's twilight produces on the mind; or, like the memory of our youth, when that joyous season of life has long departed. Lady Mary was not forgotten. Oh! no; but she was re-

garded by me as a vision, beautiful, evanescent, and indistinct, something to be recurred to in solitude and prayer, but too pure, too sacred for this work-o'-day world. In a few months, I blush to say *how few*, I again mingled with the busy crowd; the time-killers, who trembled at death, yet find that the frail and uncertain tenure by which existence is held, passes not rapidly enough, and therefore try to accelerate its speed by all the means in their power. I again frequented my old haunts, the clubs; was a regular equestrian in Hyde Park, and looked in at most of the fashionable routs and balls of the season.

Mothers, aunts, and married sisters, honored me with no small portion of their attention. My fortune was magnified into more than double its actual amount, and I was looked on as that most coveted of all bipeds, a marrying man, a good *parti*, or prize, in the lottery of wedlock, which it behoved all prudent spinsters to endeavor to secure. The lesson I had received from Arabella Wilton had made a forcible impression on my mind. I was now prone to suspect that it was my *fortune*, and *not myself*, that attracted the attentions I received; and I turned with disgust from every *unmarried* woman who said a civil thing, or extended a gracious smile to me, viewing her as a designing speculatress, who was thinking only of pin-money, jewels, and all the *et ceteras* that my wealth could furnish. I hardly know which is the most objectionable character of the two, the man whose vanity misleads him into fancying that every woman who bestows upon him a kind word or smile is smitten with him; or he, who suspects that his fortune gives him irresistible claims on the attention of the sex. Vanity is a primitive weakness; but suspicion is a failing acquired by that worldly wisdom, which few ever attained, except at the price of this mean vice.

Having an intuitive fear of the interested motives of *unmarried* women, I sought the society of those, who, if less interested, were not less interesting,—I mean the married. And here, "I could a tale unfold."—But no, let me forbear, and leave my *bonnes fortunes* to the imagination of my readers.

At this period I was presented to Lady Elmscourt, one of the reigning belles of the day, though as the French would say, *un peu passée*. The time which had elapsed since her diploma of beauty had been conferred upon her seemed to have set upon it the stamp of universal concurrence. Nobody could question the authenticity of charms, acknowledged during twenty years; hence, her reputation for loveliness passed current, long after the attractions that had acquired it, had lost their lustre.

My attention was drawn towards her, at the period to which I am now recurring, not merely by her beauty, though that might have excused the thraldom of wiser heads than mine, but by a certain air of sentiment that prevaded her countenance; and which, if it amounted not quite to melancholy, possessed all the softnees and charm, which a gentle pensiveness never fails to lend a handsome woman in the eyes of a man who has known a disappointment of the heart. Lady Elmscourt, however, was even then arrived at that age, when to guess the precise number of lustres she had numbered, becomes a difficult task: admirers always diminishing one, if not two, and the world in general, and friends in particular, adding an equal number.

She insinuated, or implied, for what well-bred woman ever does more on such subjects, that she was thirty-three. This acknowledgment was made by references to epochs, when she was, as she said, quite a child; or to others, when she first came out. Her cheek had lost none of its bloom, perhaps it had increased, rather than diminished, the brightness of its hue; for it wore a certain fixed, though still a fine red, that never appears before maturity has for some years replaced the delicate and evanescent tints which belong only to youth.

Her eyes were as brilliant, but less pellucid than formerly; her hair as glossy, but much less profuse in its wavy tresses; and her rounded charms approached that dreaded degree of *embonpoint*, which indicates the *motherly* as well as the matronly character. Certain slight lines, so slight as to be almost imperceptible, *around* the eyes, and a protuberance of the skin *beneath* them, furnished the envious with proofs that, as they coarsely remarked, though she had *le chair de poule*, she yet was no chicken. But imposing as was all this evidence, it failed to convince me that she was other than a very beautiful and captivating woman, more especially in a well lighted ball-room, or in the softened shade of her own boudoir. It is only rendering justice to her taste to add, that she seldom allowed the garish

sun to shine on her charms, or submitted herself, unveiled, to the dangerous ordeal of broad daylight.

Blessed with an indulgent husband, a large fortune, and uninterrupted good health, what could be the cause of the apparent melancholy of Lady Elmscourt? This question I asked myself more than once: and its solution not only piqued my curiosity, but excited my interest. A little more discrimination on my part, might have easily led to a discovery of the source of her chagrin. But I was never remarkable for being quick-sighted to the defects of a handsome woman; and in this precise case was willing to invest with the ennobling halo of sentiment, a peculiarity which originated but in weakness of mind. Lady Elmscourt was mourning over her departed youth, and departing beauty; the gradual desertion of which, few women are philosophical enough to behold with resignation or equanimity. Nor can we blame this regret, when we consider how much *we* foster their vanity; and encourage the culpable notion, that youth and the charms of person are their surest, if not best claims on our attachment.

My acquaintance with Lady Elmscourt had ripened into intimacy: each interview rendering me still more the slave to her waning charms. I looked on them with the same feelings with which we regard the setting sun—a deep admiration for the brilliant, but fading beauty, mingling with melancholy at the recollection, that its loveliness is fleeting away, and will soon be irrevocably lost.

We talked sentiment, that rail-road to the heart; agreed on the insufficiency of the pleasures of a frivolous, or to use what might be called its synonyme, a fashionable life, to fill up "the void left aching in the heart." In all these conversations we were, of course, as incomprehensible and diffuse as sentimentalists usually are; retaining only the impression, that *we* were superior to the herd around us, and that it was this superiority which rendered us unhappy by unfitting us for a contact with them.

Lady Elmscourt talked, as I thought eloquently, of the misery of uncongenial minds, misunderstood feelings, and crushed sympathies. No definite accusation against her liege lord was ever uttered, unless it were in the avowal, and it was made in bitterness of feeling, that he had no taste for amatory poetry; laughed, yes, positively laughed, at Shenstone's charming pastorals; preferred Dryden and Pope, to the exquisite translations of the Persian Hafiz; and had a detestation for French romances. I confess that in my heart I felt a warmer sympathy with the literary taste of the husband, than with that of the wife. But this dissimilarity of sentiment I carefully concealed from her; leaving her, with the usual hypocrisy of my sex, to imagine, that I considered all who could differ with her in opinion, as mere senseless clods of earth, and herself a portion of its fine porcelain, fit only to pass into delicate hands.

"She talked of the misfortune of marrying, while yet a child; such, she more than insinuated, had been her fate; and now (and here she looked unutterable things,) while *her* heart retained all its freshness, the *lover* of her youth had degenerated into the *husband*. Life had lost all its illusions; and she was—not happy.

When a woman acknowledges to an admirer that she is not happy, there is but one course left for him to pursue, which is to swear that *he* is miserable, and that he loves madly, hopelessly; taking most artful care that she shall infer from his looks and tones, as well as from his speech, that *she* is the object of this hopeless passion.

Women like to inspire *hopeless* passions; for, even the most mundane of the sweet sex, always retain some portion of the pristine romance of their characters: just as flowers, though withered and faded, still retain some faint remnant of their native perfume.

I had made some progress in a declaration of this kind; exaggerating the admiration I felt for her into a passion, worthy the hero of a French melodrame. During this rhapsody she looked half pleased, half ashamed; just as a woman, who is weak but not vicious, may be supposed to look, when she has by her own folly drawn on herself the insult I was now offering; an insult which every woman authorises, when she is so unthinking and indelicate, as to repose a questionable confidence in the breast of a stranger. And here let me warn my female readers, that such confidences are invariably considered as direct advances on their parts.

I was in the midst of my passionate avowal of tenderness, when the door was suddenly opened, and in walked a very good-looking, gentlemanly, middle-aged man, with a most prepossessing countenance. By the by, I have often been struck by the extraordinary disparity of appearance between men of a certain age

and their better halves, who generally look like the elder daughters, or younger sisters of their liege lords, though they are nearly of the same age. The husband presents his bald front, from which the locks that once adorned it have long receded, growing "fine by degrees, and beautifully less," until only a few lingering locks, of mingled hue, remain; while the wife presents her head, shaded by glossy ringlets, or silken braids, as profuse, nay, more so, than when she was indebted for such ornaments to nature, and not to her *coiffeur*.

But to quit this digression, and resume my narrative. Lady Elmscourt seemed for a moment embarrassed; and no wonder, for there is something peculiarly annoying to a well bred woman, in being interrupted, in the midst of a love scene. Quickly, however, recovering her presence of mind, she presented me to the unconscious intruder on her privacy, who *was* no other than her husband. After the usual civilities, he turned to her, and said:

"I am come, my love, to ask a favor of you. The duke of Ancaster has lent me his box at Covent Garden for this evening, and I wish to take Emily to the play. I know you dislike going; but will you let me be her *chaperon?*"

"Why, really," replied Lady Elmscourt, "I do not approve of her frequenting theatres—I think the practice of permitting young people to appear at such places, highly reprehensible."

"But my dear," said her lord, deprecatingly, "Emily is not *quite* so young as all that. Why, let me see she will be——"

"Oh! pray, say no more," interrupted Lady Elmscourt; "if you have set your heart on taking her, and she desires to go, I cannot refuse my consent; for I hate disappointing young people."

"Why, my dear," rejoined her lord, "to hear you speak, one would imagine Emily to be a child. You forget how old she is; and that, in a short time, she will be ——"

"Well, well," again interrupted Lady Elmscourt, preventing him from finishing the sentence, "if you really intend her to go, you had better ring the bell, and have her told to hold herself in readiness."

I took my leave, fancying, as I gave a parting glance to Lady Elmscourt, and marked the expression of discontent which clouded her brow, that she looked at least ten years older than when I entered her boudoir. Vanity whispered that this discontent arose from her mortification at my hearing that she had a daughter, who was, as Lord Elmscourt emphatically expressed it no longer a child. Still, however flattering might be the cause, its effects on her countenance served to disenchant me exceedingly: we men, being so egregiously selfish, that we are more disposed to find fault with, than to pity, the evils to which we ourselves give rise. I once heard an acquaintance of mine lament that his wife looked extremely ugly, when jealous; never reflecting that *his* conduct exposed her to the passion, and its unembellishing transformation.

When I met Lady Elmscourt at a *soirée* the evening of the day alluded to, looking as blooming as ever, her dark eyes sparkling with vivacity, and her rich red lips opening with continual smiles, I forgot that I had thought her *un peu passée* in the morning, and became more assiduous than ever. The general admiration she excited among the men, enhanced the power of her attractions in my eyes, and perhaps really increased them; for, a coquettish woman, and *she* certainly was of that genus, always looks more captivating when she sees that she is admired. Never had Lady Elmscourt been more *fascinating* and *encouraging*—perhaps the words might pass for synonymes—at least, in the vocabulary of a vain man. She smiled on *me*, as I fancied, with peculiar sweetness; but, I dare be sworn, that half a dozen of my contemporary coxcombs entertained the same impression of the smile which he bestowed on *them*.

She asked me where I intended to pass the autumn; a question which, with my usual fatuity, I considered to denote a more than common interest in my movements consequently, my reply was the expression of a wish, that wherever I might be I trusted it would be at some place which would admit of my sometimes enjoying the happiness of her society. She looked rather embarrassed at this speech, but *not* displeased; and I began to flatter myself on the easy conquest I had achieved.

"Where do *you* pass the autumn?" asked I, determined to pursue the course our conversation had taken.

"We go to Elmscourt Park in July, and shall be stationary there for some time," replied Lady Elmscourt.

"Is not Elmscourt Park near Alnwick?" demanded I.

"Yes, within a few miles;" was the answer.

"Then, I shall certainly accept an invitation in your neighborhood, often pressed on me," said I, "and trust I may hope to see you."

I threw into my looks and manner as much meaning as I could, while making this speech; and she appeared, if not pleased, at least not offended, by its freedom. She wore a bouquet of flowers, which furnished me with an opportunity of addressing to her one of the countless silly compliments for which flowers supply the theme; and which are as *fade* as are generally the objects that suggest them. I declared my envy of the position of hers, and my desire to possess them.

"You are really too bad, Mr. Lyster," said she, "and I must not listen to you."

Now, when a lady tells a gentleman that, "he is too bad," he is apt to construe her assertion into a sort of avowal, that he is not bad enough; and, consequently, I was preparing to repeat some of the numberless *platitudes* which fashionable men utter to frivolous women, when she broke from me, in affected alarm and joined a group who were conversing at a little distance. I followed her, and caught her eyes, which avoided not the encounter of mine, but met and sustained it with an earnest softness which I should be sorry to see my wife, if I had one, exhibit to any man.

When the *soirée* was over, I conducted her to her carriage: her small hand shrank not from the pressure of mine; nay, I thought, but it might be only fancy, that hers returned it, as she placed in it the coveted bouquet. How slight a circumstance can change the whole current of our thoughts and feelings! As her carriage drove away, I raised the flowers to my lips; their odor brought back to memory the dropped bouquet of the lost, the lovely Lady Mary, and all the sensations which I that evening experienced.

"She," thought I, "would not have *given* me her bouquet. Never could I have presumed to breathe an unhallowed vow in *her* chaste ear. *Her* eye would never have met the gaze of mine with answering tenderness. No! no! Mary was a pure, a spotless, as well as a lovely woman!"

And, as these thoughts rushed through my mind I threw the bouquet from me with disdain; for, its late owner had lost so much by a comparison with the sainted Lady Mary, that her power over my imagination was at an end: and I scorned myself for having yielded to her witchery. If women knew how much of their empire they lose by weak or guilty concessions, policy would supply the place of modesty; and men would not so frequently be furnished with food for the encouragement of dishonorable hopes, and the gratification of inordinate vanity.

A gay supper party at my club, in the society of some six or eight young *roués*, of fashionable notoriety, dispelled the melancholy which my reminiscences of Lady Mary had excited; and the frequent bumpers of champagne aided by the libertine compliments lavished by my companions on the personal attractions of Lady Elmscourt, revived my admiration for her. Men are so weak as to be always influenced by the admiration of other men for a woman: and many an embyro passion that might never have been blown into a flame, and many a nearly extinct one, have been rekindled by an accidental commendation of her of whom we have hitherto either thought but slightly, or have ceased to think with pleasure. A sure proof, this, that vanity is, in most cases, the principal fascination in the love affairs of men. Had my passion for Lady Elmscourt been a sincere one, I could not have borne to have listened to the free, the libertine compliments, paid to her person; but as it was, they gratified my *amour propre*, and piqued me to persevere in my attentions to her.

I commenced my route to her house on the next day, with an unoccupied heart; but with a head filled with the flattering eulogiums which my gay companions had bestowed upon her beauty. *They* thought her a conquest worthy of contesting; and that she evidently encouraged my attentions; consequently, every word or glance of hers, was now remembered "as proof as strong as holy writ," of her *tendresse* for me; and, therefore, *pour passer le temps*, I was willing to devote to her the idle hours that had latterly hung heavy on my hands. To get rid of them, and excite the envy and jealousy of my companions, were desirable objects; objects which generally furnish the chief motives in the *liaisons* which men of fashion form. So, reflection *faite*, as I have said, I bent my course towards Lady Elmscourt's the next day, at the usual hour.

This interview after the flirtation of the previous night, must, I felt, lead to a definite understanding between us. I had gone too far to recede; and her encouragement of my advances had been too decided, to leave her an excuse for repelling me. All this I thought over, without a pulse beating quicker, or one illusion of love warming my heart. I reflected on my position, and its probable results, as calmly

; a *liaison* with a married woman was a crime, involving the parties in dan-, sin, and shame, and laying up sorrow l remorse for the future.

This indifference, perhaps, partially ose from having witnessed the frequency similar delinquencies in the society in hich I lived; and the feeling, or rather ne utter want of all feelings, which the nan of fashion always habitually exhibits n his *liaisons*.

In passing through Grosvenor Square, my attention was excited by a shriek, if the most harmonious sound of alarm that ever met my ears, might be called by so unmusical an appellation. I turned, and observed a young female endeavoring to disengage herself from a large Newfoundland dog, that jumped on her with more animation than violence, he evidently being in play, A matronly looking lady was using her efforts to force the dog away; but he pertinaciously continued to jump on the young lady, to the discomfiture of her robe, as well as of her person. To run to her rescue, and drive the canine admirer away, was the work of a moment; but her large bonnet became untied in the struggle. and fell from her head, leaving exposed to my ardent gaze, one of the loveliest faces I ever beheld. She might have served as a model for a Hebe; youth and health lending all their charms to a countenance, marked by a perfect regularity of features, joined to a matchless complexion. Eyes blue, and, by her alarm, suffused with tears, convinced me, for the first time, of the truth of the old poetical simile, which compared such eyes to "violets bathed in dew;" lips like divided cherries, and cheeks that shamed the rose, with hair of chestnut brown, emulating the tendrils of the vine, in its wavy spiral curls, and the softness and gloss of the finest silk in its texture, with gently curved brows, and long eyelashes, of the darkest hue, completed the picture of the lovely creature who stood before me.

I could have gazed on her for ever, but I was recalled to a sense of propriety, by the stern look of the elderly lady, who having coldly thanked me, and arranged the discomposed robe of the young beauty, led her off in another direction.

I stood as if transfixed to the spot, gazing after them, half, ay, more than half, tempted to follow the route they had taken, but checked by the repelling looks of the matron. Who could they be? I would have given hundreds to have discovered; but, as I had left my groom and horses at the top of Brook Street, I had no means of tracing their abode, unless I chose to follow them myself. I was, however, so near the house of Lady Elmscourt, that I decided on entering, determining to ascertain if she knew any of her youthful neighbors who answered to the description of my beautiful incognita.

She received me with her most winning smiles, yet showing just as much feminine embarrassment, as was requisite to remind me that she had not forgotten my advances of the previous night, and, as I thought, to induce a repetition of them. Nothing forces a man to commit himself so much, as a woman's betraying that she expects him so to do. I entered her house with every thought fixed on another, and totally oblivious of the love speeches I had so recently addressed to her; but, her ostentatious consciousness of her recollection of them brought them all vividly before me: and, like a fool, I now resumed the same tone of tenderness. 'Twere idle to repeat my *fade* compliments, and protestations of attachment; and her sentimental temporising, which found expression in some such original and incoherent phrases as the following:—"It was wrong, yes, she knew it was very wrong to listen to me;" an opinion in which I perfectly coincided. "*Friends* we might be, and she hoped we always should be; honor and virtue did not prohibit this; but more than friends we never could be to each other. She had duties to perform, duties of a wife and a mother; and though she *esteemed* me" (ladies always esteem their admirers,) "I must talk to her no more of love."

Her repulses, if such they might be called, were so gentle, as to encourage rather than rebuke me; all that she said being only what every woman, similarly situated, thinks it *convenable* to say on these occasions; occasions that had never occurred, had not their own levity and coquetry induced them; for, no man, who is not a fool, will ever hazard a declaration of love to a married woman, who has not previously given him encouragement. She, however, who has listened to an avowal of illicit passion, even though she rejects it, has sullied the pristine purity of her mind; and never was there more truth than in the line—

"He comes too near, who comes to be denied."

I was pouring forth my asseverations of

passion, when the door flew suddenly open, and my beautiful incognita stood before me, uttering—

"Oh! dear mother, pardon this abruptness, but I was so frightened, and I feared some one might alarm you by telling you of my panic."

At this moment, her eyes fell on my face; and a beautiful blush proved her recognition of me.

"But this gentleman has, doubtless, informed you of all," continued she; "for *he* it was who rescued me from the dog."

I would willingly have laid down my life for the kind look that accompanied this hurried speech, and the sweet blush that preceded it; for I was already in love, yes, positively in love with this charming creature, to whose mother, five minutes before, I had been offering my vows. At this moment, Lord Elmscourt entered the *salon*, and having met in the ante-room the *dame de campagnie*, who had witnessed the attack of the dog, she related the circumstance to him, attaching more importance to it than it deserved. He embraced his daughter, who having pointed me out to him as her deliverer, he was vehement in his expressions of thanks.

Lady Elmscourt seemed embarrassed, and not unconscious of my evident admiration of her daughter, near to whose youthful charms hers sank into shade so completely, as to be wholly eclipsed. That she loved her was evident; but that she was anxious to keep her in the back ground, was quite as apparent; and, to an unconcerned spectator, which *I*, however, was not, it would have been an amusing study to have observed, how much of the *mother* was forgotten in the pretensions of the handsome woman, jealous of a rival to her charms, even though that rival was found in her own child.

"You had better retire to your room, my dear Emily," said Lady Elmscourt, "and repose yourself. You are still agitated from your recent alarm."

"She must not, however, depart without thanking her champion," said her father. "Go, my love, and shake hands with Mr. Lyster," and he led her towards me, covered with blushes.

She held out a hand—oh! what a hand! small, plump, dimpled, and fair, as ever met the light. Not the dull, dead white, produced by the constant use of almond paste, cold cream, and half a hundred other cosmetics; not that opaque white which marks the generality of fine ladies' hands, and indicates the want of circulation arising from——idleness. No, hers was so beautifully and delicately tinted with a pale pink, that it looked like the interior of a maiden blush rose. This exquisite little hand fluttered in mine, like a frightened bird in the grasp of a rude school-boy; yet it lingered a moment there too, while she bestowed on me one eloquent glance of gratitude, that spoke more than words; though *they* were not wanting, as, resuming some portion of her native dignity, she gracefully and graciously uttered her thanks. Her father then led her to the door, and I seized my hat, and retreated; dreading to find myself, even for a moment, alone with the mother, while every pulse of my heart was beating for the daughter.

"I hope, Mr. Lyster," said Lord Elmscourt, "that you have no engagement for to-morrow, and that you will give us the pleasure of seeing you at dinner."

Though I *had* an engagement, I hesitated not to accept his invitation, that I might again behold Lady Emliy. I left the house as much in love as if I had never experienced the passion before; and vain fool that I was, ready as ever to believe, that the object of my passion was already disposed to share it.

Love is, I think, like fever; one severe attack leaves the patient subject to relapses through youth; and each succeeding one renders him more weakened, and, consequently, more exposed to future assaults.

I thought of Emily, every hour through the rest of the day, and naturally enough dreamt of her at night. I counted the time with impatience until I could present myself at Grosvenor Square; and at last ascended the stairs of her father's mansion, agitated by hope and fear, as each of these passions alternately suggested the chances for or against my seeing her. I found Lord Elmscourt in the drawing-room alone, and received a most cordial welcome from him.

"I have been endeavoring," said he, "to prevail on Lady Elmscourt to permit Emily to dine with us to-day, as we have only yourself and two of our country neighbors, who have known her since her birth; but my efforts have been unavailing. She will, however, join us at dessert, which she always does when we are *en petite committée;*" and he rubbed his hands joyfully, as in anticipation of the pleasure of seeing her.

He seemed to have an instinctive feeling that I had taken a lively interest in her; and that her presence would have been as agreeable to me as to him. Lady Elms-

court entered the room, attired with even more than usual care; but, in spite of the elegance and studied effort of her toilette, it struck me that she looked more *fanée* than I had ever observed her to look before. I remarked the strong resemblance between her and her lovely daughter; a resemblance so disadvantageous to her ladyship, that it at once reminded the beholder of that, which she evidently took much pains to make them forget, namely, her age.

The two country neighbors were very similar to the generality of that genus. They ate considerably, and talked eternally of country affairs; of commons to be inclosed, packs of hounds to be given up, and other, to me, equally interesting topics. At last, one of them remarked how exceedingly well her ladyship was looking, "quite as well indeed, as if she had not a grown daughter to bring out."

This observation occasioned an increase of color in the cheek of Lady Elmscourt; but, I scarcely need add, the blush contained more of anger than of pleasure. They were continually referring to circumstances that had formerly occurred; reminding Lady Elmscourt, that such, or such, an event, took place about seventeen years ago, just after the period of Lady Emily's birth. Then, one of them, perfectly remembered the illumination in the village of Elmscourt at that epoch; while the other quite as vividly recollected, that, at the country ball the year before, he had the honor of opening the ball with her ladyship.

She was evidently discomposed at their *mal-à-propos* reminiscences; and suffered under the infliction to which her vanity and assumption of juvenility exposed her. But her tormentors seemed totally unconscious that she did not derive as much satisfaction as themselves, from their diverting recollections of the past.

Dinner over, and the dessert placed on the table, Lord Elmscourt desired the groom of the chambers to inform Lady Emily that she was expected in the *salle à manger*. I felt my heart beat quicker at this message, and was conscious that I was exhibiting my discomposure, as I caught the eye of Lady Elmscourt fixed on me, with, as I thought, a scrutinising glance.

The servant quickly returned, saying that Lady Emily was not quite well, and had retired to bed. I fancied that I perceived a smile of malicious triumph on Lady Elmscourt's face, as she regarded me, noting, as I dare be sworn she did, an expression of deep disappointment on my countenance. Already a romance was composed in my imagination: Emily, the beauteous Emily, was its heroine, and my unworthy self, its hero. The mother in love with me, and suspicious of her daughter, complicated, and gave interest to, the plot; my beloved and I were to be exposed to all the machinations of jealousy; and this prevention of Lady Emily's presence at the dessert, was the first active step of the drama.

"Did you know that Emily was ill, my dear?" asked the alarmed father. "It is very strange; for I saw her a short time before I descended to the drawing-room, and she appeared in perfect health. I must really go and see what is the matter with her; and apologising to us for his absence, he left the room.

The country neighbors seized that opportunity of discussing the probability of an approaching dissolution of parliament, a probability in *those* days as often anticipated by the persons who desired it, as in *these*.

Lady Elmscourt, in a *sotto voce*, asked me if I did not admire Lady Emily?

The question embarrassed me, for I dared not say *how much* I admired her; and a cold assent would have appeared hypocritical. I was sure that Lady Elmscourt was narrowly examining my countenance during the interrogation; for, though I did not *see* that her eyes were on me, yet I *felt* that they were; and this consciousness added to my confusion.

I was relieved by the entrance of Lord Elmscourt leading in triumph his lovely daughter, her eyes sparkling with animation, and her cheeks blooming with the roses of health; and the glad smile that played round her lips, I took to be an unequivocal symptom of her pleasure at seeing me. I could not forbear stealing a look at her mother; and though it was but the glance of a moment, I discovered dissatisfaction, nay, more than that merely negative feeling, portrayed on her countenance; at least, such was my uncharitable conclusion.

"Well, for once I have defeated the manœuvres of Mrs. Villiers," said our host, rubbing his hands with an air of great satisfaction. "I was sure Emily was not ill; and equally sure that she was longing to be with us."

Lady Elmscourt positively blushed, an irrefragable proof, as my vanity whispered, that the manœuvre of keeping Lady Emily from us, was hers, and not Mrs. Villiers.

"Emily, here are your old friends, Sir

John Belton and Mr. Thorold; and your new friend, Mr. Lyster. They are each and all glad to see you, I can answer for it: Mr. Lyster especially, if, as I believe, it be true, that we always like those whom we have served. I am not casuist enough to know whether the *obliged* entertain the same feeling; but, I think too well of my Emily to suspect her of ingratitude. So, I take for granted, that she is as glad to see Mr. Lyster, as he evidently is to see her."

I could not resist stealing a look at Lady Emily at this observation, and was vain enough to be delighted at perceiving her cheeks suffused with blushes. Her eyes, too, were cast down with a pretty embarrassment, that lent her new charms, and called forth a remark from the obtuse Mr. Thorold—"That *he* would lay a wager, there was no ingratitude in Lady Emily's heart towards Mr. Lyster." Having made this acute observation, he chuckled with that peculiar laugh, to which country gentlemen of a certain age, and who rarely quit their own country, are prone.

I pitied the increased embarrassment of the beautiful girl, which this silly speech had occasioned; and her mother, too, seemed to dislike the tone the conversation had taken; for her lynx eye had detected its effect on me.

"We all expected that Lady Emily would have been presented at court this season," said Sir John Belton; "and Lady Belton and my daughters looked through all the papers to see her name, and the description of her dress."

"I thought young ladies were always presented when they had completed their seventeenth year," interrupted Mr. Thorold, "and Lady Emily entered her eighteenth, in April."

"Ah! Lady Elmscourt, how old our children make us appear; but, 'weeds of grace, grow apace,' as the old verse says. Why, there is my eldest daughter, who is two months younger than Lady Emily, and *she* has been a *wife* these seven months; nay, more, will soon be a *mother*. Fancy *that*, my lady; every dog has his day, as the old saying is. I shall soon be a grandfather; and you, my lady, how will *you* like being a grandmother, eh? And yet all this must happen very soon; for Lady Emily is not one who will be left long on your hands. Will she, Mr. Lyster? *Apropos*," (he did not say of what,) "Lord Belmont is expected home from Italy, in August, is he not?"

The lovely Emily was covered with blushes, but, whether, at the mention of marriage in general, or Lord Belmont in particular, I could not discover. Her mother, however, relieved her by rising from table and leaving the room; Lord Elmscourt making no effort to detain them, as he also was embarrassed by the blunt coarseness of his stupid, but well-meaning neighbor. I had a presentiment that Emily would not escape some unkindness from her mother; and this fear, mingled with a vague dread of Lord Belmont, and the *apropos*, haunted me during the long hour and a half that elapsed before we were summoned to coffee, in the drawing-room, where Emily was—not.

Lady Elmscourt assumed an air of dignified coldness towards me; for which I respected, and would have thanked her, had I not been persuaded that jealousy and dislike had usurped the softer, but more reprehensible feeling, she appeared to have entertained for me the previous day. How did I execrate the folly that urged me to *feign* a passion I never felt. All the enormity of my conduct stood exposed to my view. The immorality of seeking to form a *liaison* with a married woman, now, for the first time, appeared to me in its true colors, ineffably wicked and sinful; and I became shocked at my past conduct. All this renovation of my slumbering morality, and for which I was so ready to give myself credit, arose not from sober conviction of wrong, but from selfishness alone. It had sprung into life in a few hours, engendered by the captivation of Lady Emily; I at present, consequently considered her mother's former encouragement of my attentions, highly culpable. How severely I judged *her now*, who only two days before, I professed to love, and really did admire!

Such is man; ever selfish, ever solely regardful of his own gratification; glossing over the crimes that administer to his pleasures, and condemning them with unmitigated severity when they have ceased to be desirable.

I had such a conviction of Lady Elmscourt's lingering *tendresse* for me, that to continue my accustomed visits to her would be impossible; for, they must have led to an explanation of my altered sentiments, painful to me, and humiliating to her. To have assumed the manner of a mere acquaintance, after the impassioned vows I had made her, must have excited her anger; and to have persevered in even the semblance of attachment to her, I felt

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sauntered through Grosvenor Square
uently, in the hope of meeting Lady
ily; but, alas! in vain: she never ap-
red. At length I began to despair of
ing her again, when one fine morning,
shing to try a horse I was about to pur-
ase, I rode into Hyde Park, at, for me,
n unusually early hour; and while gal-
oping up Constitution Hill, encountered
Lady Emily and her father, on horseback.
The good Earl made me friendly re-
proaches for having absented myself from
Grosvenor Square, and Emily looked down
and blushed, while answering my inqui-
ries about her health.

How exquisitely lovely she appeared! her riding habit displaying the perfect symmetry of her form, and the breeze agitating the beautiful ringlets, which at one moment shaded her delicate cheeks, and the next floated on the air. Though a timid rider, she looked most gracefully on horseback; and I gazed on her with a delight, the demonstrations of which I felt it difficult to repress.

"Emily only commenced riding the day before yesterday," said her father, in answer to some remark of mine—"I thought she looked pale of late, for want of exercise."

My heart beat quicker at this intelligence. Yes, it must be so; her paleness was connected with my absence; and, vain blockhead that I was! I set this down in my mind as a certain proof that I had already made a deep impression on her youthful heart.

"Ever since the day you rescued her from her canine admirer," resumed Lord Elmscourt, "my wife has not permitted her to walk in the square, lest a similar accident might occur. There is nothing, after all, Mr. Lyster, like a mother's love; and Emily's mother is always uneasy when she is out of her sight."

Poor, good-natured man, thought I; little does he imagine the *real* motive of this anxiety, which I penetrated at once, and, with my usual sagacity, set down to Lady Elmscourt's jealousy. Such quick perception does vanity bestow on its slaves! One of the almost numberless advantages of goodness is, that it blinds its possessor to many of those faults in others which could not fail to be detected by the morally defective. A consciousness of unworthiness renders people extremely quick-sighted in discerning the vices of their neighbors; as persons can easily discover in others the symptoms of those diseases beneath which they themselves have suffered. This freedom from suspicion, which is one of the attributes of virtue, "is its own exceeding great reward;" and constituted in Lord Elmscourt a source of perpetual content, which the knowledge that grows of the tree of evil, might have for ever destroyed.

"Lady Elmscourt," continued he, "will only permit Emily to ride before breakfast, as she dreads her being exposed to the encounter of all the bold equestrians who frequent the Park at a more fashionable hour; consequently, we finish our ride ere you fine gentlemen are thinking of commencing your day."

An elderly acquaintance now joined Lord Elmscourt; and this accession to our party gave me an opportunity of conversing with his beautiful daughter. To the bashful timidity of a child, arising from the seclusion in which she had been immured, she joined the good sense and refinement of a highly cultivated young woman, and this rare mixture of infantine bashfulness and maidenly dignity, added new lustre to her charms. If I loved her before hearing the justness of her remarks, or being acquainted with the propriety and delicacy of her sentiments, of which every word she uttered gave proof, how was my passion increased on discovering the superiority of her mind, and the fascination of her manners.

But even these feelings, highly wrought as they were, were enhanced by the belief that she entertained for me a more than common interest; a belief that can render a woman, of even *mediocre* pretensions, attractive in the eyes of all men.

I rode with them until we arrived at the door of her father's mansion, and joyfully accepted an invitation to dine with them, at an early hour on the following day, and afterwards accompany them to the theatre.

"Can you make up your mind to sit out play and farce?" asked Lord Elmscourt; "for Emily likes to see all the performances. We shall only be three in the box, for Lady Elmscourt rarely enters a theatre; so, unless you are a regular play-going person, you will probably be bored by our long evening there."

The next morning found me galloping round the Park, true as a needle to the

pole; but the magnet that attracted me was not there; and, again, I immediately accounted for her absence, by attributing it to the jealousy of her mother.

Punctual as lovers used to be forty years ago, I was at Grosvenor Square at the appointed hour. Lady Elmscourt received me with cold politeness, her lord, with friendly warmth; and Lady Emily, with blushing kindness. I ventured to ask whether the latter had pursued her equestrian exercise in the morning; and detected, in the opposite mirror, a smile, which seemed to me pregnant with malice, on the features of Lady Elmscourt; while her lord replied,

"Oh! no, there is an end to our rides while we stay in London; for Lady Elmscourt has taken to early rising, and drives out into the country with Emily, in an open carriage, before breakfast."

"So here," thought I, "is convincing proof of the justice of my suspicions!" And a feeling of anger was kindled in my breast at finding that the jealousy of the coquettish mother would preclude me from any opportunity of seeing her charming daughter. At the theatre, at least, however, I shall certainly have the pleasure of conversing with her, untrammelled by the presence of this female Argus, whispered Hope. Judge, then, of my annoyance, gentle reader, when it was announced that this object of all my apprehensions, this destroyer of all my fondest desires and plans, intended to form one of the party. I am sure my countenance betrayed my feelings to the wily mother. I wished her—I will not say where—anywhere, however, rather than in our presence, an ever vigilant and malicious spy on every word and look of mine.

At the theatre, Lady Elmscourt manœuvred so skilfully, that she placed herself between her daughter and me, so that I could neither look at, nor speak to her, without exposing myself to the observation of mamma. I sat in perfect purgatory; longing, yet not daring, to interchange a word with the lovely girl, who evidently seemed to observe the alteration in my manner from what it had been the day before. How I hated, yes, positively hated, Lady Elmscourt, for thus thwarting my wishes; and yet, this was the very woman in whose ear, only a few days before, I had breathed vows of love! Such was my selfishness, that, though believing her still to entertain more than a strong predilection for me, I pitied not the mortification which my conduct was so calculated to inflict upon her. I thought not of *her* feelings, I thought only of my own; nor blushed at my all-engrossing egotism.

Having heard Lord Elmscourt make an allusion to the portraits of his wife and daughter, just finishing by a celebrated artist of that day, I called, on the following morning, at the studio of the painter, and saw two of the most faultless resemblances I ever beheld. Having praised them highly, as works of art, I with much difficulty persuaded the artist to make me copies of both. Heaven knows, I now felt little desire to possess that of Lady Elmscourt! though ten days before, I should have considered it a most desirable acquisition; but to prevent the suspicions of the artist, I professed an equal desire to acquire both. Thus it was that the miniatures now before me became mine.

Lord Elmscourt had taken quite a fancy to me. We never met in the street—for I dared not do more than occasionally leave my card at his door—that he did not reproach me for the unfrequency of my visits, and invite me to dine with him. His invitations I had not self-command enough to decline, as I was sure of seeing Lady Emily at the dessert; who, as I have before stated, invariably made her appearance with the fruits and flowers, whose freshness she rivalled. The ceremonious civility, but marked coldness of Lady Elmscourt, rendered, however, a seat at her table peculiarly disagreeable; particularly to a person who felt that he deserved her bad opinion. But, what would I not have endured to have the happiness of seeing her lovely daughter! on whom I doated with a passion, such as youth and beauty like hers, alone could have inspired. Nor was I without hope that *she* felt a decided preference for me; for when did the vanity of man fail to whisper hope on such occasions. All the blushing timidity arising from youthful inexperience, and the utter seclusion in which she had been brought up, I considered as incontestible proofs of an incipient passion for me, which it only required time and opportunity to cultivate into a strong attachment. If, therefore, I ever experienced a dread of not winning this charming creature, it arose in no doubt of *her* willingness to be mine, but in a fear that her mother would never consent to our union.

My hopes of happiness were raised almost to certainty, when Lord Elmscourt

gave me a pressing invitation to visit them in the autumn, in the country. This I looked on as a decided proof of encouragement of my attentions to his daughter. I accepted it with joyful anticipations, and longed for the moment that was to see me domiciled beneath the same roof with Lady Emily. I had now become accustomed to the cold ceremoniousness of the mistress of the mansion; and could hardly be said to enjoy existence out of the presence of her lovely daughter.

As the season drew to its close, Lord Elmscourt and his family departed for their seat in Northumberland. I found it difficult to support this short separation from my soul's idol, and counted the hours until I was to rejoin her. The day before that fixed for my departure for Elmscourt Park, my horse in cantering over the pavement placed his foot on a loose stone, and came to the ground with such force as to cause me to sprain an ankle, and dislocate my wrist. Never did accident occur so inopportunely, and never was one borne with so little patience!

My anxiety and ill-humor, I am persuaded, considerably retarded my recovery; but, at the end of five intolerably tedious weeks, I set out for Northumberland. On arriving at Elmscourt Park, my joy at the prospect of again beholding Lady Emily was indescribable. I fancied myself not only a lover, but almost an accepted one; for the kind letter written to me by Lord Elmscourt to renew his invitation, contained a passage that confirmed my vain hopes.

"Pray come to us as soon as you are able," wrote the good-natured earl; "we are to have some very dear friends here soon, with whom I am anxious to make you acquainted."

What could this mean, but that I was to be presented to those dear friends as the suitor of his daughter. Yes, it must be so; and my spirits rose in proportion to the expectations this paragraph excited.

The family had retired to dress for dinner when I arrived, so that my first meeting with them was in the library; where I found half a dozen guests assembled, and Lady Emily looking more lovely than ever. Dolt and idiot that I was, I fancied that in the evident pleasure she evinced in welcoming me to her natal home, there was mingled an embarrassment in her manner, that could only arise from a conscious preference for me.

I was presented to the Marquess of Ambleside, and his son the Earl of Belmont, the most strikingly handsome young man I had ever seen; and had I not been assured by my vanity, that Lady Emily's reception of me forbade my entertaining a doubt of her partiality, I should have been alarmed by the presence of one who might have proved so dangerous a rival.

Lady Elmscourt seemed to have quite recovered her former amiability of manner and was looking so young and handsome, that even near her daughter she must have been admired by the most fastidious connoisseur in beauty.

When dinner was announced, the Marquess of Ambleside conducted our hostess to the *salle á manger*. I waited, expecting to see Lord Belmont offer his arm to Lady Emily; but, to my surprise, as well as delight, her father seized my hand, and desired *me* to lead her to dinner. *This* I considered as an open acknowledgment of my position as an accredited suitor; and I looked with something of triumph towards Lord Belmont, expecting to see him overwhelmed with mortification. But no symptom of any such feeling appeared; and I wondered at his insensibility, where such a prize as Lady Emily was in question.

Seated next to this lovely creature, and now considering myself in the light of an acknowledged lover, I devoted the whole of my attention to her during dinner. I was in the highest possible spirits, and my gaiety seemed contagious, as all the party partook in it. I saw, or fancied I saw, a malicious smile on the countenance of Lady Elmscourt, as she observed the animation and self-complacency of my manner; and, what a little piqued me, I occasionally detected looks of intelligence interchanged by Lady Emily and Lord Belmont, indicative of the existence of a more familiar intercourse between them, than I wished my future bride to have with any man save me.

While I was meditating on the decorum, if not prudery, which I should exact from my fair neighbor when I should have a *right* to dictate to her, I was thunderstruck by hearing the Marquess of Ambleside, in a voice too clear and distinct to admit of a doubt of its correctness, ask Lady Belmont to drink wine with him. I gazed around to discover whether there was not some mistake, or to ascertain to whom this civility was addressed; but, to my utter horror and dismay saw his lordship's cold

formal eyes fixed on Lady Emily, who quietly assented to his proposal, totally unconscious of my state of mind!

I felt the blood recede from my heart, and mount to my temples. I feared I should fall from my chair, so sudden and overpowering was the shock I had received. But a glass of water revived me, and prevented any exhibition of what was passing in my breast.

"Mr. Lyster, permit me to have the pleasure of drinking wine with you," said Lord Belmont; "I know I am your debtor for having rescued Lady Belmont from the boisterous attentions of a dog. Emily wrote me a full account of the affair; and did ample justice, I assure you, to the prowess of her *preux chevalier*, on the occasion."

How like a fool I felt at this moment, nor did the arch glance, shot from the bright eyes of Lady Elmscourt, assist to re-assure me.

When the ladies had left the room, and we had drawn our chairs socially together, Lord Elmscourt asked me if I was not surprised when I received his letter, announcing the marriage of his daughter, which had been celebrated a week before. This letter I missed, by having left London the day it must have arrived there.

"The marriage was arranged two years ago," said Lord Elmscourt, "when the young people fell in love. We old folks thought them too young to be married; an opinion to which Belmont was by no means disposed to assent. As, however, we were obstinate, he was obliged to submit; and took the opportunity of his probation to make a long tour on the continent. He exacted a promise that Emily should not be presented at court, or go into society, until his return; a promise that her mother as you may remember, rigidly enforced. Belmont only returned to claim his bride three weeks ago: and a happier pair it would be impossible to find."

Never did a man feel more wretched, or look more like a fool, than I did, through this interminable evening! A thousand nameless little acts of tenderness were mutually exhibited by the bride and bridegroom; and on such occasions Lady Elmscourt looked at me with a smile, which seemed to say—Behold, vain fool, the proof of the error into which your egregious vanity has led you.

The next day Sir John Belton arrived, to spend a short time at Elmscourt Park, when he renewed his acquaintance with me, with that cordiality common to the now nearly extinct race of country squires. Talking of our host and the family he observed—

"They are capital people! I know few such; and *now*, that my lady is nearly cured of the only fault she ever had—"

"And what may that be?" interrupted I, expecting to hear something not creditable to her reputation.

"Why, Lord bless you, have you not found it out? I thought you Londoners had been sharper. Well, then, if the truth must be told, my lady's only fault was a desire to remain, or at least to be *considered*, young, and to be admired. This led her to be rather too civil to every coxcomb who fancied himself her admirer, and obtained the reputation of a coquette for a woman who, in fact, never had an evil intention. A more affectionate wife or mother does not exist; though she was addicted to sentimentality, and to a love of exciting admiration."

I felt the blush of shame rise to my brow, at finding how totally duped I had been by my vanity.

All the romance I had created in my imagination, of a jealous mother and a persecuted daughter, enamored of *me*, fell to the ground. Neither of them had ever possessed one particle of affection for me; the *first* only encouraging my attentions, out of love for admiration; and the second, only blushing and smiling, because blushes and smiles were as natural to her, as perfume is to the rose.

Thus ended my fifth passion; and I left Elmscourt Park, a disappointed, a humiliated, but whether or not a corrected man, the future will disclose.

## MY SIXTH LOVE.

The lesson my vanity received at Elmscourt Park, rendered me cautious of again exposing myself to similar punishment. Well and wisely has it been said, that love soon dies when deprived of the nourishment of hope; but no writer has touched on the velocity with which the winged archer-boy sickens, when vanity has been wounded, nor how rapidly he ceases to remember a flame connected with associations mortifying to his *amour propre*. I hated to think that Lady Elmscourt was merely a weak, vain coquette, encouraging my admiration for the gratification of her vanity; repulsing my attentions more gently than they deserved to be repulsed,

when they became too explicit for even her lax notions of propriety; and not caring two straws about me individually.

Yes, I hated to think her merely a vain coquette, instead of a wicked woman, attached to me by an unholy passion, jealous of her own daughter, and manœuvering to prevent my winning that daughter. To remember her was mortifying, and therefore I soon banished her from my mind. The Lady Emily quickly shared the same exile from my memory; for, how could I bear to recollect that the downcast looks, rosy blushes, and sweet embarrassment, I had so often marked with such self-complacency, were constitutional accessories to her beauty, and had not the slightest reference to me; nay, that while I dreamt my presence caused them, she was thinking only of another, and that other her betrothed husband.

I plunged into every gaiety which presented itself, to endeavor to mitigate the sense of humiliation which rankled in my mind. From this period I became more suspicious than ever of female attentions; turned with distaste from any approach to the sentimental in conversation; grew almost angry if a young lady cast down her eyes, or blushed in my presence; though, fortunately for my equanimity of temper, blushes were, even then, as seldom seen in good company, as now.

Chance took me to Cheltenham, which was, at that period, a very different place to the luxurious town it is to-day. While sauntering through the street, I there met an old gentleman whom I had occasionally encountered at the houses of several of our mutual friends; and we renewed our acquaintance with somewhat of that cordiality which Englishmen rarely experience; or, at least, rarely demonstrate, except when they come into contact in places with which they are not familiar.

He asked me to dine with him the next day; and I discovered we were inmates in the same caravanserai. On returning to mine inn, having left Sir Thomas Villiers, my old acquaintance, in the news room, I encountered on the stairs two *ladies*, who were descending. I drew aside to make room for them, taking off my hat at the same time; a politeness which they acknowledged by slight courtesies, though they passed me instantly. I saw that one of them was extremely handsome, and the other tolerably good looking.

I retired to my chamber early that night, and, while undressing, heard female voices in the next room; which being divided from mine by a slight moveable panelled partition only, allowed me to hear every word of the following dialogue:—

"No, you may say what you will, Eliza, but you cannot persuade me that it can be agreeable to marry a man old enough to be my father, who wears creaking boots, and a horrible wig. The very thought of it makes me ill."

"But, really, Miss Villiers ——"

"Pray, don't Miss Villiers me. Dear Eliza, call me Caroline, Cary, as papa does; any thing but Miss, it is so formal."

"Well, then, dear Caroline, surely Sir Henry Moreton is not so *very* old; and he really is *still* a handsome man."

"Why, the very words you use, Eliza, prove he is no husband for me. Not so *very* old—humph! and *still* a handsome man. Why may not I, a passable looking girl, (though I say it myself, who ought not to say it,) with heaven knows, how many thousands to my fortune, find a husband (and I am in no such hurry, either) who is only half a dozen years older than myself? a disparity of years which would make him of the mature age of twenty-four, and neither too *young* to look after a wife, nor too *old* to have a sympathy in her pleasures."

"But perhaps he might not possess the large fortune of Sir Henry—his fine seat in the country, his grand mansion in town."

"Pooh, pooh! a fig for each and all. How provoking it is of you, Eliza, not to remember that, having these *agrémens* of my own already, by marrying Sir Henry, I only acquire *duplicates* of them; and who values duplicates? incumbrances of which people always wish to get rid. If I dislike my husband, shall I be less miserable in a fine house than in a poor one? Will his large fortune buy happiness? No, no; the creaking shoes and the odious wig, would be as unbearable, nay, perhaps more so, encompassed by luxuries, than if I were compelled to pore upon them in some humble abode, where poverty might blunt fastidiousness."

"But, as your papa has set his heart on the match ——"

"And as my papa's daughter has set her heart *against* the match, what is to be done? I know papa only marries me to Sir Henry, to secure some one to play chess with him every night. Oh! you may laugh, but, it is true nevertheless."

"Why, how can you, dear Caroline, suspect so good a father as yours, of being

so selfish as to sacrifice his only child for his own gratification."

"But *he* does not see any sacrifice in the affair. My father has outlived even the memory of youthful feelings, and therefore has no sympathy with them. He thinks that riches and chess form the happiness of life, because they form his; and, consequently, that he is securing mine, in giving my hand to Sir Henry. When I have spoken to him on this subject, he has only shaken his head and exclaimed, 'Ah! Cary, you are a little fool, you know not what is for your good; when you are as old as I am, you will think as I do.' 'But, sir,' I have replied, 'before that period arrives, a great many years must elapse; and before the love of riches and chess comes, one has occasion for some other'——'Love, you would say,' he has rejoined, filling up the pause in my sentence; 'No, no, Cary, love is all moonshine and stuff, never stands a year's wear and tear. But money and chess are the *summa bona* of life; one never gets tired of *them*.' And thus, probably, ends the conversation, of which this is a specimen. How, therefore, reason with papa, when he is sure to repeat over and over again, the same argument? Besides, whenever I have said something peculiarly incontrovertible, he grows angry, tells me not to be undutiful, and again very politely assures me that I am a little fool."

"I am certain, dear Caroline, that he loves you too well to persist in forcing you into this marriage, as soon as he shall have discovered how exceedingly averse to it you are."

"And I am certain, Eliza, that he loves his own enjoyments too well, *not* to persist; convinced as he is, that this marriage will secure them. He loves me just enough to desire to retain me always near him; and loves chess so inordinately, as to desire to retain Sir Henry Moreton (who affords him a victory every night) perpetually with him. This hopeful marriage accomplishes both these desirable ends; and, consequently, be assured, he will never consent to its being broken off. Heigh ho! what a wretched prospect! Now, if Sir Henry was like that handsome, gentlemanly man we met on the stairs to-day—I wonder who he can be? Did you observe what beautiful hair he displayed when he took off his hat? *He* wore no wig, I can answer for it; and *his* boots did *not* creak."

I had been hitherto amused, rather than interested, by the dialogue, to which I could not avoid being a listener. But, at the mention of the "handsome, gentlemanly man," my attention became rivetted; and I instantly began to take a lively interest in the speaker, who had so denominated me: for, *me* I was positive it must be. I immediately set down in my own mind that Caroline must be the lovely girl I had seen on the stairs, and Eliza, her companion; and, for once, I was not wrong in my conjectures.

"What a pretty name is Caroline," thought I; "and how I should like to be privileged to abridge it into Cary. She who bears it is vivacious and clever. How *naïve* were her observations on her father, and how just on other points. She is a charming person!"

And here, reader, for the *sixth* time, my heart became touched, ay, sensibly touched; and the wily god, Love, for the nonce, found an entrance to it, by the ears. Man! man! wilt thou never be wise? Only two minutes before the mention of "the handsome, gentlemanly man," I had set down Caroline as a pert, flippant, self-conceited girl; but *now*, she appeared a prodigy of talent and vivacity, and I longed, ardently longed, to make her acquaintance.

The voices in the next room died away by degrees, into monosyllables, ending in a kind good night. Then I, too, sought my pillow; my self-complacency increased, to dream of the charming Caroline, who had administered this soothing opiate.

I passed up and down stairs next day much more frequently than my *sorties* from the house required; but, I met not her who occupied all my thoughts. The day appeared unusually long, and I looked forward with dread to a dull, drowsy *tête-à-tête* dinner with Sir Thomas Villiers. But, imagine my surprise, my joyful surprise, when, on entering his apartment, I discovered the two ladies I had seen the day before on the stairs, who were introduced to me as Miss Villiers, his daughter, and her friend Miss Percy. Not a single blush, or the slightest symptom of embarrassment, marked Miss Villiers's recognition of me, as she gracefully courtesied in return to my respectful salutation.

"How strange," thought I, "that the introduction to 'the handsome, gentlemanly looking man,' produces so little effect on her. But, she is too clever, I suppose, to be always blushing, like Lady Emily; and yet I should have liked to have seen a little consciousness in her manner."

Nothing could be more agreeable than the dinner, thanks to the animation and

*naïve* remarks of Miss Villiers; for her friend was a well-bred, but rather taciturn, person, more given to enact a listener than a talker; and Sir Thomas's conversation had no merit save that of serving as a foil to the wit of his lovely daughter. Miss Villiers was singularly beautiful; a beauty that consisted even more in expression than in features, though hers were nearly faultless. Her eyes were of dark blue; and might have been considered too dazzling, from their constant flashing (no other word can I find to convey their beaming vivacity,) had they not been shaded by lashes whose length and jetty hue softened their lustre. Her nose was neither Roman nor Grecian, but, according to my taste, much prettier than either of those classical models; it was what the French call *mignon*, and *un peu retroussé*. Her mouth was small, with full red lips, as like Suckling's description of those of his mistress, as if it had been written for them; and her teeth, those indispensable requisites to beauty, were matchless.

The only fault a hypercritical connoisseur in loveliness could have detected in this charming face, was, that the cheek bones were rather too high and prominent, hinting that their owner had either Irish or Scots blood in her veins. But even this peculiarity added to the piquancy of her countenance. Her hair was of the darkest shade of brown, and her complexion of the most brilliant and healthful tint. Never did I behold a face so captivating, nor so lavishly endowed with an endless variety of expression! Now sparkling with archness, and in the following moment softly beaming with all the touching innocence and amiability of a gentle child. But, if a fault might have been discovered in her face, the most fastidious critic would have vainly looked for one in her figure, which was symmetry itself. Slight, yet beautifully round, every movement betrayed some new grace; and her hands and feet (those infallible indications of high birth,) were of such exquisite proportions that they would have redeemed almost any personal defect, had such existed.

I know not whether my female readers are aware of the high place we men accord to delicately formed hands and feet, among the indispensable requisites to beauty; but few, if any men, can be found who will not admit, that no other charms can compensate for the want of them.

To return, however, to the brilliant, the beautiful Caroline, whose fairy feet and hands led to this digression; there she sat, wielding, like an enchantress, her power over us all. Her father tried to oppose the shield of his dull common-places to the shafts of her playful wit, but, as I need scarcely add, was foiled in the effort; while Miss Percy and I yielded without a struggle to her fascination.

"Do you play chess, Mr. Lyster?" asked Sir Thomas. I replied in the negative, which drew forth a heavy sigh from him, and an ejaculation expressive of his impatience for the arrival of Sir Henry Moreton. Miss Villiers pouted her beautiful lips, and exchanged significant glances with Miss Percy.

"I am quite at your service, sir," said the latter, moving towards the table on which the chess board stood; while the poor girl's face wore an expression of resignation worthy of a martyr.

"Well, well, Eliza, you are better than not having a partner at all," growled the baronet; "though you do play so confoundedly ill, that there is no pleasure in conquering you. Now, Sir Henry Moreton is a first-rate player, ay, a very first-rate player; and it requires the exertion of all my skill and science to gain a victory over him, night after night, as I do."

"How very odd it is," said Caroline, saucily, "that Lord Montagu, who is considered so good a chess player, declared that *he* thought Sir Henry a very mediocre performer."

"I should like to have heard his lordship assert this," retorted the angry father; "for I should soon have proved to him the contrary. A very mediocre player, indeed! Why, how can that be, when *I*, who have been playing chess these forty years, and practice makes perfect, they say, must play my best, ay, my very best, to conquer him? Never repeat such nonsense to me, Cary. I thought Lord Montagu had been a sensible man; but, *now*, I have a very poor opinion of him. Go to the pianoforte, and sing me one of my favorite songs to compose me; for you have really ruffled my temper by repeating to me Lord Montagu's silly superficial judgment."

Never did a voice more perfectly harmonise with a face, than did that of Caroline with hers. She sang admirably, and, what few women do, lost no portion of her beauty while singing. No ungraceful distortion of the features; no affected turnings up of the eyes, marred her fair countenance; whose varied, but natural expression, eloquently evinced her sympathy

with the sentiments of her song. When she had finished, Sir Thomas appealed to me, if Cary did not sing very well? a question, in reply to which, I committed no outrage to the most scrupulous veracity in giving an unqualified affirmative.

"Ay, ay, she owes that to me, entirely to me; I prevented her screaming, like a pea-hen, and opening her mouth to the extremity of her ears, as the Ladies Mellicent do; or turning up her eyes, in imitation of a duck in thunder, like the Misses Weston, whose singing is so much admired. 'Cary," said I, 'I won't have *my* eyes offended, while my ears are pleased.' —Didn't I, Cary?—And so, you see, if she sings well, she owes it all to me.—Why, bless me, Miss Percy, what *can* you be thinking of? Dear me, dear me, you are enough to make a parson swear. Oh! how I wish Sir Henry Moreton were come! I never shall have a comfortable game until he does."

The evening passed away delightfully, notwithstanding the occasional grumbles and regrets of the baronet; and I left him at eleven o'clock, (the hour at which parties *now* assemble, being *then* that which was fixed for their termination,) more in love than I thought it possible I ever should be again, and, perhaps, as much so as I had ever been before; though the present passion partook not of the elevated character which marked and dignified my attachment to Lady Mary Vernon.

I anticipatad with impatience the hearing myself again talked over, in her chamber, by the lovely Caroline. What would she say? had "the handsome gentlemanly man, with the beautiful hair," improved on acquaintance in her opinion? I longed to know; and again forgot the impropriety of seeking to become a listener, in my anxiety to learn her sentiments. As I was approaching the door of the sleeping room I had occupied the night before, I was met by the courtesying chambermaid, who told me that some company having departed, she had prepared a much better room for me at the other end of the house, to which all my things had been removed.

"And why did you do so without my orders?" said I, with much more acerbity, than gallantry ought to have permitted me to have used to one of the softer sex.

"I beg your pardon, sir; I'm sure I'm very sorry, sir; but mistress said you objected to that room, the day as you comed; and that she promised you this here the minute it was empty; so now, sir, all your things are there."

"Have them removed back again directly," said I, angrily; though I perfectly remembered having found fault with the apartment the day of my arrival, and the landlady's having promised me another.

"I'm sure, sir, I'm very sorry, but Miss Villiers's maid has got the room now, on purpose to be near her young missus; and all the bandboxes and himperials belonging to the ladies are now *there;* so, sir, its impossible to move your things back."

I assented to the truth of this representation with a very bad grace, and took possession of my new and comfortable chamber; deeply mortified with the change, which deprived me of hearing what the beautiful Caroline thought of me now that we were acquainted.

I saw her every day, and each day became more fascinated. Whether, however, her father perceived that I was smitten, or dreaded I should become so, I know not; but he soon took an opportunity of informing me, that he was in daily expectation of the arrival of Sir Henry Moreton, who was shortly to be married to his daughter.

Though I was prepared for this intelligence, the confirmation of it from his own lips gave me pain; for I had indulged hopes that the marriage was not irrevocably fixed. To leave the lovely Caroline a victim to a man she disliked, a man old enough to be her father, and with creaking boots, and a wig? "No! forbid it gallantry, forbid it love!" exclaimed I to myself, as I mentally determined to make her the offer of my heart and hand, and prove that "the handsome gentlemanly man" was not ungrateful.

"But, alas! the tide of true love never did run smooth; while I was anticipating her bashful hearing of my suit, which was to be pleaded the very first opportunity, and her approval yielded with coy sweet delay, Sir Henry Moreton arrived a week at least before he was expected, and to see her alone now became impossible. Sir Thomas Villiers prevented my usual evening visit, the day that his future son-in-law arrived, by telling me they had business to arrange, marriage settlements to look over, &c., &c.; but the next day he hoped that I would dine with him.

I spent a solitary evening, miserable at the thought of what the charming Caroline was undergoing; for, independent of her original girlish dislike to the creaking shoes and wig, I was morally certain she had now to contend with an affection for "the handsome, gentlemanly man;" whose

attentions must have completed the conquest which his appearance had awakened. Yes, if she wished, and I had heard the soft wish flow from her rosy lips, that Sir Henry Moreton resembled me, then surely my attentions, which had been unremitting ever since the hour I was presented to her, must have won her affections. I was miserable, and I felt *she* must be miserable also, for, never would *her* young and sensitive heart lose the impression I had made on it. Of the enduring character of my *now* attachment I felt not quite so certain; for, I had more experience in love. But no man doubts the depth or the durability of a passion *he* inspires; though all men are sceptical as to the extent or the sincerity of the attachments inspired by others of his own sex.

I presented myself at the usual dinner hour next day, and was introduced in due form to Sir Henry Moreton. He was a tall good-looking man, of about fifty; and I was not in his company five minutes before the creaking shoes and wig proved the accuracy of Caroline's description; though the latter was one of the most skilful imitations of what the newspaper puff advertisements style "the greatest ornament, a fine head of hair." I have remarked that people who wear creaking shoes or boots, are precisely those who are the most addicted to locomotion. Sir Henry walked up and down the room perpetually to lower the blind, to open a door, to close one, or to place a chair. In short, he was ever in a state of ceaseless restlessness, except when at table or at chess.

Caroline's beautiful eyes were red and swollen with weeping; and my passion for her was more than ever increased by this proof of her sensibility. When the ladies had withdrawn (and ardently did I long to accompany them), Sir Thomas announced to me, that the marriage of his daughter was to take place early in the ensuing week.

"We shall all proceed to Moreton Hall," continued he, "where we shall remain for some time."

"And where," said Sir Henry, "I shall be glad to have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Lyster, whenever he can make it convenient to pay us a visit."

They talked over their plans, scarcely making any reference to the future Lady Moreton, who was included in the *we* (how I detested the word!) with all the *sang froid* imaginable. Sir Henry Moreton was a formal, dull sort of man, answering precisely to the term, prig. He seemed perfectly satisfied with himself on all points, and next to himself, evidently estimated Sir Thomas Villiers, whom he treated with that profound respect, which middle aged people affect towards those who are their seniors; a line of conduct which they imagine, gives them an air of juvenility. His conversation was a tissue of truisms and common-place remarks, delivered with an air and an emphasis, clearly indicating that he himself considered them well worthy of attention.

"And this," thought I, "is the companion with whom the lovely Caroline is to pass her life! Why, his looks alone are sufficient to dullify the liveliest mind; and his conversation to set asleep the most wakeful, such are its soporific qualities."

When we joined the ladies, the two baronets immediately sat down to chess, a proceeding which seemed a great relief to Caroline.

"Now, Mr. Lyster, if you wish to see a game scientifically contested," said Sir Thomas, you have a good opportunity; for, notwithstanding what a certain person who shall be nameless, has been pleased to assert, relative to Sir Henry Moreton's being a mediocre player, I think you will admit that, on the contrary, he is a first rate one."

"I should be glad to know," replied Sir Henry, his dark cheek reddening, "who the individual is, who has so far betrayed his own ignorance of the game, as to pronounce so erroneous an opinion?"

"That must be a secret," said Sir Thomas; "but the person, as you justly state, only betrayed his own want of knowledge of the game.

"One who can for hours contest a game with Sir Thomas Villiers, can be no mediocre player, let me tell the person, whoever he may be," resumed Sir Henry.

"That's precisely what I said, Sir Henry. You remember, Mr. Lyster, these were nearly my words: and surely Sir Harry, who has now been a chess player these thirty years, must understand the game."

"I beg your pardon, Sir Thomas," replied the offended baronet, "you are under a mistake as to the number of years; for, at the period to which you refer, I was but a child, and consequently could not have been a chess player."

Caroline could not resist a smile, in which I joined, at this defence of his youth; but Sir Thomas, totally unmindful of the

juvenile pretensions of his son-in-law elect, and only anxious to defend what he had once advanced, quaintly repeated—

"Child indeed! why surely, Sir Harry, a *man* is no *child* at twenty? and as you are now fifty, there was nothing *very* wrong on my part in stating that you had been thirty years a chess player. I have had ten years start of you, which accounts for my superiority; but I will lay a wager that you will beat any player of your own age in England, though you cannot beat me."

Never was there a man more vexed at this plain statement of his age, and in presence too, of his future wife, who numbered barely eighteen summers, than Sir Henry. He grew red in the face, and made some false moves in the game, while his bride elect could not repress the smiles that played round her beautiful mouth.

"Sing us something, Cary, my love," said Sir Thomas, "I never can play well unless I hear your voice. And you, Miss Percy, while Cary is singing, had you not better come and look over our game? It will be a good lesson, and enable you to fill Sir Henry's place, in case of absence or illness, better than you have lately done. Cary, sing me 'Old Robin Grey;' that's my favorite song. Don't you like 'Robin Grey,' Sir Henry?"

"I must always like whatever Miss Villiers may sing," replied Sir Henry; "But I confess 'Robin Grey' is not a particular favorite of mine."

"And why not, pray?" asked the obtuse Sir Thomas. "I should like to know what fault you can find with either the music or words? the first is melody itself, and the second contains a whole code of morals; yes, Sir Henry, and of the best morals. Why, what can be more dutiful, than a youthful creature who marries a rich old man, to please her parents; and conquers her love for a young man, because she remembers the old husband was good and kind to her. Now, I like a moral in a song as well as in a story, and I maintain that this song has one."

Even the quiet and silent Miss Percy seemed to feel the awkward parallel that might be drawn between the old husband of the song, and the present candidate for the matrimonial state. Caroline sighed, and I echoed the sigh; while Sir Henry looked redder than ever, and played, as Sir Thomas observed aloud, unusually ill.

"Come, Cary, give us the song," said her father, a command quickly obeyed, and never was song more admirably sung; though her voice occasionally trembled, and its plaintive tones drew an expression of pensive sympathy to the usually placid countenance of Miss Percy.

I sought, but sought in vain, an opportunity during the evening, of revealing the passion to the fair object of it. She continued seated at the piano forte, which was so near the chess table, that I durst not hazard a word; and I left the room more in love than ever, and with less hope of the successful issue of my attachment. The next day, and the next, found Caroline with Sir Henry Moreton always at her side or hovering so near her, that all private conversation with her was impossible. I therefore determined to pour out my whole soul in a letter to her, which I indited with all a lover's eloquence, and as I *now* think but did not *then*, exaggeration. Yet, how have it delivered to her? whom could I trust? Sir Thomas was one of those old fashioned masters of a family, now nearly extinct, and even at the remote period of which I write, beginning to be very scarce, who ruled his child, his house, his servants, and all that were his, with a despotic hand; allowing them little freedom of thought, at least little freedom in the expression of it, still less freedom of action, and even refusing his daughter the permission to peruse a letter until it had been previously passed through the ordeal of his inspection.

All this rigid discipline I had causally discovered during my short acquaintance with the family; so how was I to evade this mental *cordon sanataire*, established by the old baronet? I had recourse to Miss Percy; her placidity and gentleness led me to hope that she would befriend an unhappy lover, and in a confidential note to her, explaining my passion for her friend, I entreated her to deliver the letter that contained an avowal on which my happiness depended.

Miss Percy kept me not long in suspense; for, in half an hour from the period of its being despatched, the letter addressed to her friend was returned to me in an envelop, containing a note, stating that she "regretted I should have formed so erroneous an opinion of her character and principles, as to suppose that she would be the medium of a clandestine correspondence with the daughter of her benefactor, and the affianced wife of his friend."

I had scarcely finished the perusal of her billet, when Sir Thomas Villiers entered my room. I concluded that Miss Percy had betrayed me to him, and that he came to accuse me. His first sentence confirmed my suspicion.

,o, so! you are a pretty fellow," said

Ay, it is all known," thought I; "but ıst put the best face on it;" and accordy drew up with what I meant should ı dignified attitude.

'I say you are a pretty fellow," repeat- Sir Thomas; "here," pointing to a large velop on the table, "is the pacquet ıopened containing the London papers, 'hich I received this morning, and which scarcely gave myself time to glance over, ıefore I sent them to you, with a note, stating that I had not quite perused them, and requesting you to return them as soon as possible. Ay, here they are, note and all, unopened. Why, what the devil can you be at? what have you been thinking of?"

I made some blundering excuse, much relieved by finding my secret was still one to him; and he told me he wanted my assistance in a little matter. "I have had my daughter's portrait painted here," continued he, "by a very clever artist, who came to drink the waters. I intend it as a gift to her future husband, an agreeable surprise for the anniversary of his birth day, which takes place next month. I wish it to be set in a snuff-box, and not being learned or skilled in the taste of those sort of gim-cracks, I want you to select the pattern for me, and superintend the execution. Will you undertake the commission, and don't mention a word about it to any one here?"

So saying, he handed me the portrait, which was so admirable a likeness of the fair original, that the sight of it occasioned me an emotion, I found it difficult to conceal.

"Well, you'll have it done, won't you? there's a good fellow," continued he; "so now good bye, I must be off, for I have a thousand things to settle. *Apropos* of settling, we have arranged that Caroline is to be married the day after to-morrow, three days sooner than we intended; but, Sir Henry has got a letter from home, saying that a county meeting is to take place, at which he wishes to be present, and so we advance the ceremony, that we may all set off together to Moreton Hall."

I know not *how* I *looked*, but I know how I *felt*, at this intelligence; and I wonder that he observed not my agitation. He did *not* remark it, however, for he left the room, repeating his "good bye, my dear fellow, I must begone; I have a thousand things to do, so good bye, good bye."

I eagerly seized the portrait, pressed it to my lips again and again, and internally vowed that never should it leave my possession.

"What!" thought I, "shall the unfeeling clod for whom it was destined, he who expedites his marriage with the loveliest and most fascinating of her sex, merely that he may attend a county meeting, shall he become the possessor of this treasure? No! forbid it love! happy, happy man, the beautiful original will be his! oh! how unworthy is he of such a creature; but this portrait *never* shall be his! I will have a copy made of it; a dull father, and duller husband's eyes will not detect the cheat; and this, this shall be mine, when she is lost to me for ever!"

I tore myself from Cheltenham next day; I dared not trust myself to see Caroline again, nor remain in the place when she was to approach the altar, to vow to another, that affection which I still believed to be all my own. I fled, therefore, from my abode like a madman, passed through London, where I only remained long enough to have a copy of the beautiful miniature made, and confided to a jeweller for setting. But ere I departed from the metropolis, I read in the papers, a pompous account of the marriage of Miss Villiers, "only daughter and sole heiress of Sir Thomas Villiers, Bart., of Conway Castle, in Wales, to Sir Henry Moreton, Bart., of Moreton Hall, in Gloucestershire, and Willisden Park, in Berks." The papers added, in the usual newspaper phraseology, "That the *happy* couple set out immediately after the ceremony, for Moreton Hall, where they were to spend the honeymoon."

The conclusion of the paragraph maddened me. "*Happy* couple," I repeated, in a rage, throwing the paper from me, as I figured to myself the weeping, shrinking bride, wishing that the handsome, gentlemanly-looking man had been the substitute of *him* of the creaking boots and wig.

Never have I since read a similar newspaper announcement, and they occur nearly every day, without a bitter smile and doubt as to the reality of the happiness of the "*happy* couple;" and, could all the motives and feelings that influence the greater number of these individuals be analysed, how few would be considered entitled to the appellation! But this dark conviction, by the young and sanguine—and when was youth otherwise than sanguine?—will, I know, be regarded as the jaundiced picture of an old bachelor. Well, be it so; yet a day will arrive, when the young will

become old, and see objects through a less brilliant glass than they now employ; and *then*, they will not consider the old bachelor's opinion to be so very cynical.

I pass over a lapse of ten years, employed in travelling through Italy, Germany, Russia, and Sweden. Time, the best friend the unhappy know, though the one they most frequently accuse, had done for me that which he does for all, had healed the wounds of disappointed love; though a fond recollection of the beautiful Caroline still lived in the heart where she had reigned. I thought of her often; fondly loved to gaze upon her portrait, and still figured her, to "my mind's eye," as fair, blooming, and sylph-like as when I had left her ten years before. I never thought of her as a wife, or a mother; the idea would have been too painful; and we all have a wonderful facility in banishing disagreeable ideas. No, Caroline, the *spirituelle*, playful Caroline, could not be the mother of boys and girls, to *him* of the squeaking boots and wig. There was something monstrous and disgusting in the notion; and so, I never permitted myself to entertain it.

Taking up an old English newspaper, one day, at an inn in Russia, I looked over the list of births, marriages, and deaths. The name of Sir Henry Moreton caught my eye; and while my heart beat quickly, and my hand trembled, I read a detailed statement of the death of the chess-loving baronet. I looked anxiously at the date, and found the paper was above a year old. And so, Caroline, the lovely Caroline (*my* Caroline she might *now* be,) was free! There was joy, there was intoxication, in the thought; and in a few hours, I was in my travelling carriage, on my route to England.

I paused not, rested not, even for a day, until I reached London. Some one else might forestall my happiness. Beauty and talents like hers, could not fail to command admirers; and I trembled lest I should be too late in the proposal I intended to make her.

I ascertained that she was in town, and immediately called at her house, a stately mansion in Hanover Square. On being shown to the library, I found my old acquaintance, Miss Percy, wearing the same demure aspect, but not placid countenance that I remembered at Cheltenham. Alas! time had dealt rudely with her complexion, and taken away all the roundness of her figure, which now presented angles little in harmony with feminine grace. Encircling her eyes were certain marks, known by the vulgar appellation of crow's feet; and, descending from her nostrils to her thin lips, where two muscles in such *alto relievo*, as to display the anatomy of the movements of her mouth. I was startled at beholding this change.

"What!" thought I, "If Caroline should be as wofully altered as is her friend; if she, who was disposed to be rather too sylph-like, should, from the unhappiness of an ill-assorted union, have faded to a shadow, like the creature before me! But no; I will not allow myself to think such a cruel metamorphosis possible. She cannot have lost her beauty, and must be still the lovely, the fascinating Caroline."

All this passed in my mind while Miss Percy was relating to me, that not only Sir Henry Moreton, but Sir Thomas Villiers, had "sought that bourne whence no traveller returns," having preceded his friend and son-in-law by a year. Miss Percy put on what the French call a *figure d'occasion*, a most lugubrious countenance, while announcing these sad events.

"Lady Moreton has suffered severely," continued she; "for never was there a happier wife."

I could have beaten her for saying so, though I wholly doubted the fact; for, how could such a girl as Caroline be happy with the elderly gentleman with creaking boots and a wig?

"Her ladyship is only now beginning to receive her friends," added Miss Percy, "and is at this moment engaged with her lawyer; but she will be here in a short time."

Almost while she uttered these words, a *large* good-looking woman entered the room, with a high color, and cheeks whose plumpness encroaching considerably on the precincts of her eyes, caused them to appear much smaller than suited the proportion accorded to the lines of beauty. Her figure harmonised perfectly with her face; and was one of those to whom the epithet "a *stout lady*," is always applied. She approached me, while I stood in silent wonder, and in accents never forgotten, exclaimed, "Ah! I see, Mr. Lyster, you do not recognise me."

Ye gods! it was Caroline that now stood before me, the once beautiful Caroline! But never had such a transformation taken place in mortal. I was almost petrified by the sight, and could scarcely command sufficient presence of mind to go through the common forms of politeness, by maintaining a conversation.

"Come, Mr. Lyster," said Lady Moreton, (again to call the *stout lady* before me, 'Caroline,' would be mockery,) "come with me, that I may show you what you, I am sure, as an old friend, will have pleasure in seeing."

"What can she mean?" thought I, as I followed her through the ante-room; "but, after seeing *herself*, nothing can shock or surprise me."

She opened the door of a large room, in the middle of which stood two rocking horses, mounted by a boy and a girl, two chubby, rosy-faced children, bearing a strong resemblance to her ladyship; *not* as she formerly looked, but as she at present appeared. Two other, and younger children were toddling about the room with their nurses, making no little noise; and at a table in the recess of the window, sat the two elder scions of the family stock, engaged at chess.

"There, Mr. Lyster, are my two eldest sons," said Lady Moreton. "This is Sir Henry Moreton, and the other is Sir Thomas Villiers, to whom my poor father's baronetcy devolved. Are they not strikingly like their father and grandfather, Mr. Lyster?"

Never were seen two more extraordinary resemblances! and the gravity of their countenances, and the strict attention they paid their game, completed all the features of this wonderful similarity.

"They will play for whole hours together," continued Lady Moreton, pensively; "and are never so happy as when thus employed. Nothing affords me a greater gratification than to watch them at such moments, Mr. Lyster; for their occupation brings back to me the memory of those dear, and lost to me for ever ——" and she wiped a tear, yes, positively, a real tear, from her eye.

"Come, Henry, my dear, come and speak to this gentleman," resumed his mother, with a tremulous voice,

The boy approached me with measured steps, and a formal air; and his shoes creaked so exactly as those of his father used to do, that for a moment I looked at his hair, expecting to see that he also wore a wig, so precisely did he appear a miniature copy of the defunct baronet,

"It is strange," said Lady Moreton, "to what a degree he has all the little personal peculiarities of his poor dear father. I do not know, Mr. Lyster, whether you ever observed that my dear Sir Henry's shoes always creaked? At first, I had a distaste to the sound; for I was, as you remember, a giddy, and perhaps an over fastidious girl, about trifles. But one soon learns to approve all the peculiarities of the father of one's children; and I now have a pleasure, though it is not devoid of melancholy, in hearing my boy's shoes creak like those of his father."

The good-natured mother was so perfectly in earnest, that, hang me, if I could smile at the bathos of this sentimentality; though, I confess, I lamented that the young Sir Henry did not wear a wig, which would have perfected the almost irresistibly ludicrous resemblance.

The mother kissed each and all of her progeny, with true maternal tenderness; and I left her, perfectly cured of my old flame, and smiling at the illusion I had for ten years nourished, at the cost of sundry sighs and regrets.

In ten days after my first visit, I called again at Hanover Square, in order that I might not appear uncivil to Lady Moreton; for, I confess, all desire of beholding her, had quite subsided; nay, the sight of her was disagreeable to me. Again I found Miss Percy alone, who, with her demure face looking still more demure, and her formal manner still more formal, "hoped I had forgiven her for returning my letter at Cheltenham; but, her principles would not permit her to be the medium of a clandestine correspondence."

"Oh, I quite forgive you, Miss Percy," said I, "though at the time it caused me much unhappiness, for I—(you will pardon me for saying it, as, after so great a lapse of time, it may be said without impropriety) I rather thought I was not disagreeable to Miss Villiers."

"You certainly were *not* disagreeable to her," replied Miss Percy, "for I have frequently heard her say she thought you very good natured."

"But, did she never say more than this, Miss Percy?" I retorted, quickly, driven off my guard; "did she not once avow, ay, and to *you*, Miss Percy, when you were urging her to gratify her father by marrying Sir Henry, and she was objecting to his age, creaking shoes, and wig—did she not then, I ask, confess that she wished *I* was the substitute for Sir Henry?"

"Never, by my sacred word of honor!" rejoined Miss Percy.

"She might not have precisely named me, but she most clearly and distinctly meant me," I insisted.

"I do remember, Mr. Lyster, her objecting to the age, the creaking shoes, and wig, yet never, never, making any allusion

to you. But how *you* can have imagined this misconception, and, more strange still, how you can have known our private conversation, astonishes me."

"Who, then, was meant by the 'gentlemanly looking man' (I was ashamed to say handsome) you met on the stairs, who took off his hat, and whose hair called forth some flattering remark from your friend? *I* Miss Percy, met Miss Villiers and you on the stairs that day; *I* took off my hat, and therefore it was not preposterous to believe that *I* was the person meant."

"Oh! *now* you remind me of the circumstances (though how *you* came to know them is a mystery to me,) I *do* remember her alluding to a gentleman we met on the stairs, the same day we met you; *he* was peculiarly good looking, and Miss Villiers often reverted to his appearance. *We* met this same gentleman in London the subsequent season, in society. Lady Moreton recognised him; and I well recollect her saying to me, 'Eliza, marriage makes a strange difference in people's feelings. Do you remember my wishing that gentleman had been the person chosen for my husband instead of Sir Henry; ay, and my admiration of his hair? *Now*, Eliza, I would not change *my* husband for the handsomest man that nature ever formed; and the *wig* of the father of my boy is more attractive to me than the finest head of hair in the world.' The gentleman was Lord Tyrconnell, Mr. Lyster; I may tell you so now, as he is dead."

Well did I recollect seeing Lord Tyrconnell pass through Cheltenham the very day to which she alluded. He was the handsomest man of his time, and his hair was remarkable for its luxuriance and beauty; yet, I never suspected that the praises that sounded so sweet to my ears, from the lips of the fair Caroline, could apply to other than myself. Thus ended another illusion; the destruction of which cost me perhaps as much mortification, as the change which, in defacing Lady Moreton's charms, had terminated my attachment to her.

And now, gentle and courteous reader, having, by the recital of my youthful flames, beguiled some hours that might have been tedious to me, and, peradventure, transferred the infliction to you, I cannot close without offering my thanks for the patience that has conducted you to my last love. Vale, then, and take with you the good wishes of

AN ELDERLY GENTLEMAN.

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